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GLASNOST AND SECRECY  
IN THE SOVIET MILITARY

by

MIKHAIL TSYPKIN

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*GLASNOST'* AND SECRECY IN THE SOVIET  
MILITARY.

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## SUMMARY

The Soviet Union has made some substantive and symbolic steps to institute *glasnost*' (openness) in the military. This study has concentrated on current limitations or even reversals of military *glasnost*'.

Military *glasnost*' in the USSR is not a strategic deception. However, the deeply entrenched practices, the peculiarities of Soviet political culture, and the uncertainties of the military-political situation are likely to complicate verification of at least some of arms control and confidence-building measures agreements as well as confuse the U.S. about its understanding of Soviet military plans and intentions.

The introduction of *glasnost*' in the Soviet society in general and the military in particular has been necessitated by the terminal crisis of communist ideology, politics, and economics. Exceptional secrecy, a crucial weapon in the marathon confrontation between "socialism" and "capitalism," has become an impediment to economic and political progress while the importance of confrontation and "class warfare" is clearly declining. An inter-agency research program recommended significant relaxation of secrecy regulations. However, there is no law on state secrets. Without that, the recommendations cannot be implemented in a consistent way.

The Soviet military has grave reservations about *glasnost*'. Not only have Soviet military bases been opened to foreign inspectors, but also the Soviet military has been opened to public scrutiny and impassioned criticism. The secretiveness of the Soviet military is prompted both by habit and self-interest. Although the new Law on the Press has abolished the preliminary censorship of mass media, the military censorship continues to function as a department of the General Staff, and has the powers to punish the mass media for publishing alleged "military secrets," a very vague concept until there is a law on state secrets.

The Soviets have made a substantial progress by acknowledging past cases of deception. In arms control, they have acknowledged that the large phased-array radar near Krasnoyarsk is a violation of the 1972 ABM Treaty. In military doctrine, they now recognize that the widely trumpeted "Tula-line" of Leonid Brezhnev (according to which the Soviet Union did not believe in the possibility of winning a nuclear war and was not striving to seek military superiority) did not affect the real Soviet plans for fighting and winning a nuclear war and for seeking military superiority over NATO, Japan and China taken together.

**It is of utmost significance that none of these confessions came from the Soviet military, but rather from civilian officials. The Soviet military command has not only failed even to support such statements, but either has avoided the issue altogether or has attempted to argue against the admission of Soviet deception, as in the case of the ABM radar.**

On the one hand, Minister of Defense Yazov speaks about establishing "transparency" in military affairs; on the other, the military continues to warn against Western "espionage." They suggest that they are opposed to anything but the most narrowly defined *glasnost'*, sufficient only for minimum arms control verification requirements. The Soviets have recently given access to some of their military and R&D facilities, including those associated with BMD lasers, to visiting American officials and scientists. The visitors appear to have been exposed primarily to the hardware whose general characteristics had been publicly disclosed by the U.S. intelligence community. Even this limited access has caused open irritation among many in the military.

The Soviet military has been profoundly influenced by the Soviet/Russian bureaucratic elite's political culture, which has developed for centuries without any concept of accountability to the public and respect for law. It has been characterized by the building of elaborate Potemkin villages to deceive one's own political leaders and foreign visitors. Already under *glasnost'*, the Soviet military has attempted to mislead public opinion at

home and abroad on several issues. Thus, it appears that their "real" defense budget, disclosed with great fanfare in 1989, does not include such spending categories as nationwide military training of pre-draft youths and compulsory reserve officer training conducted in hundreds of colleges. It is also likely that it excludes such weighty spending categories as construction, operation and maintenance of very extensive nuclear war command, control and survival facilities for the Soviet leadership, as well as some of civil defense facilities and activities.

The Soviet military establishment suffers from an ingrained tendency to mislead the public when the stakes are high (as in the case of ABM LPAR or the defense budget), as well as when the stakes are low. For example, the Soviet Ministry of Defense has excluded civilian employees of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany from their count of the Warsaw Pact strength because these civilians allegedly do not receive military training. It has turned out, however, that all the civilian employees of GSFG, including women (who are normally not even subject to military draft) have to take part in military training.

The U.S. can not be certain about Soviet compliance with arms control agreements and military intentions until the Soviet public itself gains the right to know about such matters. The attempt to give the Soviet public such a right through the work of the new Committee of Defense and State Security of the USSR Supreme Soviet has not been successful. The Committee's membership is completely dominated by defense industry executives, high-ranking military and KGB officers, and communist party officials. As a result, it has done nothing to provide the public with any meaningful information about the current and planned Soviet military activities, and has been widely perceived as nothing more than an adjunct to the defense establishment.



In the final analysis, the future of military *glasnost'* depends on the course of political developments in the Soviet Union. If Gorbachev's program of muddling modernization continues, military *glasnost'* will survive as well. It will be hampered, however, if Gorbachev needs to rely more and more on the military for keeping the Soviet Union together and preventing workers' unrest. If an alliance of conservative communist party officials, Russian nationalists of a more conservative ilk, and military and KGB leaders takes over, military *glasnost'* has a very bleak future. Radical democratization of the Soviet Union would be beneficial for military *glasnost'*, but it is far from certain that a truly democratic government would be able to enforce all aspects of its military policy.

Any of these courses of political development may lead to the disintegration of the Soviet Union. A democratic government in Moscow can dissolve the Soviet empire into a confederation of states on reasonably amicable terms with each other, which would be conducive to compliance with existing, by that time, arms control agreements. The current government and particularly a conservative regime would be less likely to manage an amicable divorce between the Union republics. Their hostile relations would be an obstacle to their observance of arms control agreements and the rules of military *glasnost'*. That could result in the proliferation of nuclear weapons beyond the control of a government in Moscow, and unconstrained by existing arms control agreements.

It is possible that instead of a more or less controlled dissolution of the Soviet empire, we will be faced with a collapse of central authority. This would mean massive involvement of the military in politics and security operations, both conditions not conducive to military *glasnost'*. In this case, military *glasnost'* itself would lose some of its relevance because the meaning of at least some arms control agreements concluded now or in the near future would be lost in a changed world. At the same time, the West would have a tremendous stake in assuring the security and stability of Soviet command and

control of nuclear weapons. We could only hope that a measure of military *glasnost* sufficient for this purpose would survive even under extreme circumstances.

## 1. 0. INTRODUCTION.

The Soviet military spent decades establishing its reputation for extreme secretiveness. Under Mikhail Gorbachev this reputation has been challenged by verification of arms control and confidence building agreements through on-site inspections of Soviet Armed Forces (SAF) and defense industry installations, by publication of the Soviet military budget, and by a sharp discussion by the mass media and by the reconstituted Supreme Soviet of various ills plaguing the military establishment. These innovations are grouped together under the term of *glasnost* ("openness"), a policy introduced by Gorbachev in 1986-1987 in order to reinvigorate the Soviet society, to curtail the excesses of bureaucracy, to narrow the gap between the rulers and the ruled, and also to help present a less secretive and therefore less threatening image to the outside world.

The United States is negotiating a series of complex arms control agreements with the Soviets. We may expect future negotiations for even more complex and sweeping arms control measures. The recent Soviet record of compliance and openness gives grounds for serious concerns. For example, the Soviets had denied for a number of years that their large phased array radar near Krasnoyarsk was a direct and major violation of the ABM Treaty. Recently the Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze acknowledged that it was.<sup>1</sup> Since the security of the United States and of our allies, political stability in Europe and Asia, as well as other areas of the world, will depend on Soviet compliance with such agreements, on their open cooperation with the rest of the world, we must ask: how likely are the Soviets to cheat, to employ secrecy to gain unilateral advantages in an era of military *glasnost*?

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<sup>1</sup>E. A. Shevardnadze, "Vneshnyaya politika i perestroika," *Izvestiya*, October 24, 1989.

Simply compiling a litany of Soviet past transgressions is clearly no longer a useful approach to predicting their future behavior. The escalation of recent events--completely unpredictable within the traditional analytical framework of a Sovietology based upon established policy patterns and current policy pronouncements by top officials--is demanding a broader approach. We must look at the whole political context in which military *glasnost*' measures are implemented. This is necessary not only because today's volatile political climate directly affects all spheres of life, but also because this is the way the Soviets themselves approach policy analysis. In contrast to the Americans, who tend to proceed from a single fact of life to evaluating its broader context, the Soviet/Russian political culture emphasizes a progression from an analysis of a general political situation to that of its particular concrete aspects.

In a similar fashion, this study will move from an assessment of the general political situation to the role of secrecy in Soviet society as a whole, to the current struggle of *glasnost*' and secrecy in the Soviet military, and finally to a forecast of possible political scenarios as they might affect Soviet military practices in the area of secrecy and deception.

## **2. 0. THE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF MILITARY *GLASNOST*'.**

### **2. 1. The Crisis Of Soviet Confidence.**

All the three main policies associated with Mikhail Gorbachev--*perestroika*, or restructuring of Soviet political and economic institutions, *glasnost*', or public airing of various social, political and economic problems, and "new thinking" in national security--have been initiated because of a profound crisis all spheres of Soviet life. Beginning in the 1970's, dissident intellectuals have been warning about inevitable entropy unless urgent



reforms are introduced. Mikhail Gorbachev has obviously felt the graveness of the situation: in 1987 he spoke of Soviet society becoming unmanageable.

The political mentality behind secrecy and deception in Soviet politics was the traditional Marxist-Leninist belief in the inevitable and all-encompassing confrontation between the two socio-political systems and the impending victory of Soviet communism. Such ideas apparently had a firm hold on the minds of the older generation of party officials. As reported by a communist party official of the younger generation, even very recently his seniors would seriously talk about the perspectives for world-wide triumph of communism and their need "to be prepared to assume positions of responsibility in Europe, Asia, Africa and America!"<sup>2</sup> Yuriy Andropov was reported to have seen the situation in Afghanistan in 1979 through a 40-year old prism of the Spanish civil war, a confrontation between communism and fascism.<sup>3</sup> For holders of such views, the Soviet Union was not a part of a whole world, but rather a separate world in itself, not bound with the "other" world by any long-lasting common interest or values. Therefore, the Soviet elite operated in the belief that deceiving that "other" world contradicted neither the values nor the interests of this elite.

The Soviet world view shows widening and deepening cracks. Several of its previously unassailable postulates have been questioned by Gorbachev and his associates. One casualty has been Lenin's theory of imperialism, which described "monopoly capitalism" as being in its last stage of development, ripe for revolutionary change into communism. This concept was challenged by the then Party chief of ideology Vadim Medvedev, who suggested that "monopoly capitalism" is actually the normal path for long-term development of "capitalist" societies which gives them stability for the foreseeable future. This automatically takes the transition from "capitalism" to "socialism" in free-market nations out of the policy agenda.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Vladimir Bukhonin, First Secretary of the Sheksna District Party Committee of the Vologda Province, "Zhiv li Chic'ikov?" *Yunost*, 1987, no. 10, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup>Artem Borovik, "Spryatannaya voina," *Ogonek*, November 1-18, 1989, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup>V. Medvedev, "Velikiy Oktyal' i sovremennyy mir," *Kommunist*, 1988, no. 2, pp. 6, 7.

The concept of "class content" of Soviet foreign policy (that is, its strategic orientation towards the promotion of communism) has been put in doubt by the idea of "primacy of common human interests" in international politics. Politburo member and Central Committee Secretary in charge of foreign policy (until July 1990), Aleksandr Yakovlev, proposed that the Soviet policies should now be guided by "common sense," thus implying that the traditional Marxist-Leninist ideology is not a rational guide for politics.<sup>5</sup> Gorbachev himself committed a monumental ideological heresy when he described socialism as an "alternative" to capitalism, rather than as the latter's inevitable successor.<sup>6</sup>

Isn't the "new thinking" mostly a feint designed to gain the Soviets a breathing spell and then to revert to their traditional policies, one may ask? The Soviets have been highly conscious of the positive impact of adopting a common political language with Western democracies. A former official of the Central Committee confirms this, but also says that the "new thinking" reflects a genuine desire on the part of the Kremlin to pursue their national interest rather than an ideological chimera.<sup>7</sup>

This question was also raised by Soviet commentators early in the Gorbachev era, when Aleksandr Bovin compared today's Soviet foreign policy with that of Brest-Litovsk peace treaty with Germany, signed by Lenin in order to gain time before ousting Germans from areas of the Soviet Russia ceded to them by the treaty. Another well connected foreign policy commentator, Fedor Burlatskiy, forcefully denied the analogy.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, some Western observers are raising the concern of a Soviet tactic along the lines of the Brest Peace even today.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Cited in Vera Tolz, "The Soviet Union Retreats from Marxism-Leninism," *Report on the USSR*, October 20, 1989, p. 9.

<sup>6</sup>"Vystuplenie M. S. Gorbacheva," *Pravda*, November 5, 1987.

<sup>7</sup>Henry Hamman, "Soviet Defector on Origins of 'the New Thinking'," *Report on the USSR*, October 20, 1989, pp. 14-16.

<sup>8</sup>Aleksandr Bovin, "Surovaya shkola Bresta," *Izvestiya*, September 20, 1987; Fedor Burlatskiy, "Optimizm bez illyuziy," *Literaturnaya gazeta*, December 2, 1987.

<sup>9</sup>John Lenczowski, "A Dash of Skepticism Wouldn't Hurt," *The Los Angeles Times*, January 1, 1990.

The parallels with the Brest Peace Treaty are in fact rather superficial. Soviet Russia signed that treaty because it was in desperate straits, but so was Germany, the other signatory, whose resources were hopelessly overstretched in World War I. Lenin gambled on the likely German defeat and won. Whatever the economic, social and political problems of the West today, its situation is beyond comparison with that of Germany in 1918. This contrast was noticed by one of today's most prominent Russian conservatives, a man with close connections to the Soviet military establishment, Aleksandr Prokhanov. He wrote that the 1917 Bolshevik revolution took place when the rest of the world was on the brink of disaster. In contrast, today the USSR is sliding towards a similar cataclysm while the rest of the developed world is thriving.<sup>10</sup>

A good indication that "the new thinking" is more than a ploy can be found in the reaction to it by traditionalist elements in the communist party. "The manifesto" of the traditionalists, published in the *Sovetskaya Rossiya* newspaper in the form of a "letter" from a Leningrad chemistry teacher on March 13, 1988, assailed the lack of "class content" in foreign policy along with Gorbachev's other innovations. When Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze clearly placed "class content" below "common human interests" in Soviet foreign policy, then Politburo member and Central Committee Secretary Yegor Ligachev contradicted him warning that such pronouncements confuse both the Soviet public and allies.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Aleksandr Prokhanov, "Tragediya tsentralizma est' tragediya prolietoy krovi..." *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, January 5, 1990.

<sup>11</sup>Nina Andreeva, "Ne moy postupit'sya printsipami," *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, March 13, 1988; "XIX vsesoyuznaya konferentsiya KPSS: vneshnyaya politika i diplomatiya," *Pravda*, July 26, 1988; "Za delo--bez raskachki," *Pravda*, August 6, 1988.



## 2. 2. Utility Of Military Force Questioned.

A group of policy-makers and policy-advisors associated with Mikhail Gorbachev has expressed strong doubts about the utility of military force in today's world. Politburo member and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze has spoken against excessive reliance on military force and against excessive concern about use of military force against the Soviet Union; he warned that even an "overwhelming" military force "most frequently does not yield the aggressor the results he counted on, and sometimes boomerangs against him."<sup>12</sup> In a recent speech to the Supreme Soviet Shevardnadze plainly said that invasion of Afghanistan was a mistake.<sup>13</sup> On December 4, 1989, the Soviet Union also acknowledged that the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia was an error.<sup>14</sup>

The relationship between the unhappy Soviet experiences in Afghanistan and the new skepticism about the utility of military force is obvious. Throughout the first 62 years of its existence, the Soviet regime applied military means for political ends with invariable (albeit frequently very costly) success, from the civil war of 1918-1921 to World War II to invasions of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. The failure of the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 to achieve its political and military goals must have been an extremely traumatic experience for the Soviet political elite and the military establishment and the society as a whole. This is illustrated by the passions surrounding the subject of Afghanistan in the debates at the Congress of People's Deputies in June 1989. The pro-Gorbachev elements in the Soviet leadership said that the Soviet Army's withdrawal from Afghanistan signaled the end to their country's direct military interventions in the Third World.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>"Doklad E. A. Shevardnadze," *Vestnik MID*, August 15, 1988, no. 15, p. 35.

<sup>13</sup>*Izvestiya*, October 24, 1989.

<sup>14</sup>"Prague 1968: Views Now in East Bloc," *The New York Times*, December 5, 1989.

<sup>15</sup>"Doklad E. A. Shevardnadze," p. 39.

A more skeptical attitude towards utility of military power was also engendered by the case of Intermediate Nuclear Forces in Europe. Deployment of this new and powerful weapon fit well with the requirements for Soviet military operations in that region.<sup>16</sup> But the political clout gained from that deployment turned out to be insufficient to prevent the counterdeployment of U.S. Pershing-2's and ground-launched cruise missiles. As a result, what the Soviets refer to as "the second strategic front" against the USSR was opened in Europe, presenting a new threat to Soviet command centers, and to the physical safety of the Soviet political elite itself.<sup>17</sup>

Gorbachev and his associates appear to believe that the tremendous accumulation of nuclear and conventional weapons undertaken by the Kremlin since the 1960's has failed to achieve the main goal of their predecessors: ensuring the stability of communist political systems in the USSR and her Warsaw Pact allies. It turned out, on the contrary, that the diversion of huge resources to the military and the maintenance of the centralized war economies contributed to the destabilization of communist regimes. The resulting internal disintegration was the main security threat instead of the foreign enemy.<sup>18</sup>

The fear of collapse of communist regimes became quite reasonable in the aftermath of the rise of Solidarity in Poland in 1980-81, and the subsequent disintegration of the communist system there, as well as in view of mounting Soviet economic difficulties. In the "new thinking" the idea of the internal erosion of communist systems has been implied in blaming the poor condition of the Soviet economy on the mistaken readiness of the

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<sup>16</sup>Steven Meyer, "Soviet Theatre Nuclear Forces. Part I: Development of Doctrine and Objectives," and "Part II: Capabilities and Implications," *Adelphi Papers*, (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, Winter 1983/84) nos. 187 and 188, passim.

<sup>17</sup>Doklad E. A. Shevardnadze," p. 37.

<sup>18</sup>The realization of this change was first expressed in the Aesopian debate on "contradictions" in socialism. That occurred in the wake of Andropov's accession to power. Some Soviet social scientists were concerned with the possibility of a collapse of a Soviet-type regime as the result of its internal problems only without military foreign interference. That was a revision of Stalin's thesis that "socialism" in the USSR could be destroyed only by outside military force. See Ernst Kux, "Contradictions in Soviet Socialism," *Problems of Communism*, November-December 1984, pp. 20-25.

Kremlin to match all American military deployments, which, allegedly, were implemented in order to exhaust the USSR.

Gorbachev's and his group's disenchantment with military force is quite obvious, but the overall picture is contradictory and the long-term forecast is uncertain. **Too much reliance on military force is self-destructive, but can the Kremlin, lacking economic and ideological clout, solve its political problems without a credible military instrument?** The whole edifice of the Soviet external (East European) and internal empires has been built on an actual or threatened use of military force. Many in Moscow have been left in a shock by the collapse of communist rule in Eastern Europe virtually within four months (beginning with the formation of Solidarity-led government in Poland) after it became clear that the Soviets would not use military force to control internal events there.<sup>19</sup> While Gorbachev is making the best of it, one may doubt his equanimity, especially when Moscow's rule is now being challenged along the ethnic periphery of the Soviet Union itself, and the specter of a future German hegemony in Eastern Europe is looming large on the political agendas from the White House to the Kremlin.

The fear that the Soviets might revert to their old ways (with or without Gorbachev) and use force against rebellious Union Republics has so far kept the latter within the Soviet Union, but a skeptic might ask: how long will the mutual restraint last? Military force has to be used with increasing frequency just to keep the Soviet Union together under communist party control. Indeed, the threat to communist party control in Azerbaijan has resulted in a massive use of military force in January 1990. In this political context, the Soviet military policy, and the associated policies on *glasnost* are likely to be contradictory.

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<sup>19</sup>For one of the first public reactions of shock see Prokhanov, "Tragedi 'a tsentralizma."



### 2. 3. Secrecy and Soviet Politico-Economic Crisis

Pervasive secrecy has been a characteristic of the Soviet political system. Now with this system itself under attack, the systemic obsession with secrecy has also come under criticism--and *glasnost'* was born. As early as November 1985, Gorbachev sent a memorandum to the Politburo urging more objective information on all issues and more room for public criticism.<sup>20</sup> An important event was the Chernobyl' nuclear disaster, when the regime's clumsy silence and disinformation were responsible for damage to the Soviet international standing and to Gorbachev's personal prestige, for wild rumors and disorderly evacuation of endangered areas, and for further loss of the public's confidence in the government. After the initial traditional reaction of trying to veil the disaster in secrecy, the Kremlin allowed at least partially truthful coverage of the event, and allowed access of Western experts and journalists.

In July 1988, the Politburo adopted a special resolution calling for the creation of "information society" in the Soviet Union in order to reverse the Soviet growing lag behind the non-communist world in information technology.<sup>21</sup> Shortly afterwards the political and theoretical party journal *Kommunist* published an article by Vladimir Rubanov, then Department Head in the Scientific Research Institute of the KGB, in which he severely criticized the Soviet "cult of secrecy."<sup>22</sup> Given Rubanov's affiliation, some of his points regarding the political context of Soviet secrecy are worth mentioning:

- The Soviet political culture is "obsessed" with secrecy as a result of Stalinism.

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<sup>20</sup>Victor Yasmann, "Glasnost' versus Freedom of Information: Political and Ideological Aspects," *Report on the USSR*, vol. 1, no. 29, July 21, 1989, p.2.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 4

<sup>22</sup>V. Rubanov, "Ot 'kul'ta sekrec nosti'--k informatsionnoy kul'ture," *Kommunist*, September 1988, no. 13, pp. 24-36



- Because of this people react "painfully" to attempts to reduce excessive secrecy.
- Existing excessive secrecy increasingly contradicts the new political and economic realities; it further undermines the public's trust in the government.
- Secrecy serves as a defense for the bureaucratic regime unfettered by democratic institutions.
- As long as the division of the world into "socialist" and "capitalist" systems persists, secrecy has its legitimate place in protecting state interests, but the system of secrecy should be significantly modified.
- Since the system of secrecy is primarily intended to protect state interests against foreign opponents, it is logical to begin "breaking the stereotypes" of secrecy in foreign policy area.
- Lack of information on the Soviet military is used by "opponents" of disarmament for disinformation to "speed up the arms race."
- The international community, according to Shevardnadze, has a *right* (italics by Rubanov) to be informed about the true state of military affairs in any nation.
- Excessive secrecy impedes further mobilization of the peace movement in the West, prevents Soviet diplomats, political scientists and journalists from acquiring necessary data to rebut "bourgeois" scholarship.
- Relaxation of secrecy in the military area should be determined by "a principle of equal secrecy," i.e., reciprocity in the level of openness between the Soviet Union and major Western powers.
- Greater "openness" (*otkrytost'*) in this area compared to the level of "openness" in other nations would be compensated for by "moral advantages" and support by "progressive international public opinion."
- Relaxation of secrecy in the area of science and R&D would result in the long-term in an improvement of Soviet military capabilities due to intensified scientific and technological progress.

Apparently at about the same time, a **research** program on secrecy and classification regulations was initiated.<sup>23</sup> Among the participants in this inter-agency program were the Military Industrial Commission (VPK) of the Council of Ministers (the top coordinating body for the defense industry), the Institute of State and Law and other institutes of the USSR Academy of Sciences, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the State Planning Commission (Gosplan), the KGB, "and other agencies." The program was

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<sup>23</sup>V. Rubanov, "Demokratiya i bezopasnost' strany," *Kommunist*, July 1989, no. 11, p.55.

apparently completed as planned by the end of 1989, and then presented to the government; it has not made its way yet, however, to the Supreme Soviet. As a result of this program, the Soviet media have made public for the first time some specifics of the system of state secrets:

- While the KGB enforces the protection of state secrets, it does not decide in every case what is secret and what is not.
- Such decisions are made by branch ministries based on recommendations from lower levels of management.
- In this decision-making process the upper levels usually follow the recommendations of the lower levels.
- Thus, there is no single body or person responsible for a national policy of state secrets.
- There are rules for declassifying information as it becomes dated--but the branch ministries ignore these rules most of the time.
- This situation could be changed when a law on state security is passed. Such a law would be developed by the Supreme Soviet Committee on Defense and State Security (KOGB--*Komitet po voprosam oborony i gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti*).<sup>24</sup>

Thus, all the shortcomings of existing secrecy rules are blamed on the "stagnation" of Soviet society, the self-imposed isolation of the Soviet Union, and the whipped up hysteria about the "enemy," as well as the self-interest of the ruling elite.<sup>25</sup> Secrecy is an important part of the political heritage and at least some Soviets in power want it shed.

The results of the work of the inter-agency research commission on secrecy confirm that secretiveness is deeply ingrained in the Soviet political culture and institutions. The commission had to confront the enormous dimensions of the problem. Up to seventy percent of the so-called "normative acts" (sub-legal documents) which govern much of the socio-economic activity in the Soviet Union are frequently in disregard or direct

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<sup>24</sup>V. Zakhar'ko, "Grif 'sekretno' i epokhu glasnosti," *Izvestiya*, April 28, 1989.

<sup>25</sup>Rubanov, "Demokratiya i bezopasnost' strany," p. 45.

contravention to published laws.<sup>26</sup> The research commission's report contains concrete proposals on such diverse issues as a future law on state secrets, regulation of secrecy between the state agencies and the state, cooperative and joint-venture industrial enterprises, providing the personnel for enforcing the new secrecy regulations, the relationship between secrecy and international cooperation and competition in science and technology, etc.<sup>27</sup>

The commission established several laudable principles for future regulations of state secrets, such as the "principle of presumption of non-secrecy of information," the "principle of equal openness and equal secrecy in international relations," the "priority of international law" over the domestic laws in matters of state secrets, estimating the economic loss from classifying information, declassification of information where the likelihood of keeping it secret is relatively low, the priority of state interests over agency interests, and the dependence of the term of duration of classification on the character of the information.<sup>28</sup>

But, according to a Soviet author apparently involved in the program, a "number of tasks set to the ... program have not been accomplished for objective reasons." The primary reason is that a law on state secrets has not been passed, which makes the introduction of a new system for protecting and declassifying secrets impossible. It is also impossible to introduce such a system until and unless it is known what kind of an economic system the USSR will have.<sup>29</sup> Regulation of state secrets in a primarily state-owned economy is quite different from that in a privatized one. It should also be said that the declarations of sovereignty by most of the Union republics, which establish the priority of republican laws over the union laws, casts doubt on the effectiveness of a future USSR law on state secrets.

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<sup>26</sup>Petr Nikulin, "Konversiya sekretnosti: nerazumnaya nedostatochnost'," *Kommunist*, no. 9, 1990, p.70.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 79.



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The political context of present and future developments in all spheres of Soviet life is the escalating erosion of traditional communist ideology and institutions. The Communist leadership has publicly abandoned some important Marxist-Leninist dogmas. The awakened society is generally indifferent to the ideas of Marxism-Leninism (except for the concept of welfare state) and is increasingly questioning the legitimacy of the communist party rule. In this atmosphere of uncertainty, a duality of power, the split between the communist party and the soviets (legislatures), is beginning to take shape. **Whatever happens now is necessarily an aspect of the transition of Soviet society to some new, as yet undefined quality.**

### **3. 0. SECRECY AND THE MILITARY.**

#### **3. 1. Secrecy in the Soviet Military Tradition.**

A measure of secrecy in military operations and weapons development is characteristic of most military establishments, but the Soviet Armed Forces have been traditionally veiled in exceptional secrecy. Such policies are rooted in the events and realities of the Soviet/Russian past and, historically periods of extreme secrecy gave way for a time to partial openness.

It is frequently forgotten in the West that impenetrable secrecy has not always been characteristic of the Soviet/Russian reality, including the military reality. Pragmatic considerations have, from time to time, allowed for a degree of openness. The considerable isolation from the West that Russia experienced until the end of the XVIIth century was

replaced in the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries by varying degrees of openness to Europe. That was considered necessary for the economic advancement of Russia.

The advent of communism did not immediately result in extreme secrecy in the military. In the 1920's and until the mid-1930's, secrecy surrounding military activities was less tight than it became in the late 1930's. Soviet military publications discussed matters of military art and technology in a reasonably forthright manner.

German officers and engineers had numerous exposures to Soviet military affairs in the process of extensive Soviet-German military and military-industrial cooperation. (The Soviets needed this help to upgrade the quality of their officer corps and their military technology.) In the course of this cooperation, which lasted until Hitler's coming to power in 1933, German artillery engineers designed guns for the Red Army and trained Soviet engineers.<sup>30</sup> In the same period the German military closely collaborated with the Red Army practically in all areas of military activities.<sup>31</sup> Such exposures were not limited to Germans only. A French aircraft designer, Paul Richard, worked in the Soviet Union on a seaplane in the late 1920's. Among young Soviet engineers working as apprentices in his shop were future chief designers; of ICBM's - Sergei Korolev; of helicopters - N. Kamov, of seaplanes - G. Beriev; and of MIG fighters - M. Gurevich.<sup>32</sup>

Before World War II the Soviets, when politically necessary, allowed foreigners some access to the Red Army and its weapons. While the Soviets were courting the British and the French in order to avoid facing Nazi Germany on their own, they allowed Western observers at their major troop exercise in the Kiev Military District in 1936, complete with such innovations as paratroop landings.<sup>33</sup> During World War II, in a moment of dire need, the Soviets were ready to contemplate even the presence of Western troops on their territory

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<sup>30</sup>Mikhail Tsyppkin, *The Origins of Soviet Military Research and Development System, 1917-1941* (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1985), pp. 135-136.

<sup>31</sup>John Erickson, *The Soviet High Command* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1962), pp. 247-282.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 136, 137.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

apparently integrated into the Soviet command structure. In October 1941 Stalin appealed to Sir Winston Churchill to send British troops to fight against the Wehrmacht in the Soviet Union!<sup>34</sup>

It was in the course of World War II and in its aftermath that the patterns of secrecy and deception prevalent until very recently developed in the Soviet Union. In planning military operations, the Soviet high command and political leaders (mostly Stalin himself) came to emphasize the value of deception impossible without the imposition of strictest secrecy. The prime example of such deception is to be found in the 1945 Manchurian campaign against Japan, which the Soviets view as the highest achievement of their military art in World War II. In preparation for this campaign, the Soviets "undertook a major transfer of forces from the western to the eastern part of the USSR under the complete cover of a strategic deception plan."<sup>35</sup>

This pervasive secretiveness was also influenced by Stalin's resolve not to let the outside world understand how weak was the Soviet Union which emerged from World War II, and to counterbalance the potential impact of the exposure of millions of Soviet soldiers to "capitalism" in Central Europe. The atmosphere of secretiveness and distrust of foreigners was created by the late 1940's, accompanied by propaganda of the most vicious and xenophobic brand of Russian chauvinism, complete with witch-hunts and spymania. Secrecy was also important for enhancing the mystique of the Soviet regime. Then as now, secrecy has also been necessary to hide from the potential opponents various material and human weaknesses of the Soviet Armed Forces, a significant factor for a military establishment historically used to the position of the underdog because of the Soviet/Russian relative technological and economic backwardness.

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<sup>34</sup>Adam B. Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence* (New York: Praeger, 1971), p. 319.

<sup>35</sup>Notra Trulock III, "The Role of Deception in Soviet Military Planning," in Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker, eds., *Soviet Strategic Deception* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1987), p. 283.



The general inclination towards exaggerated secrecy has left a very strong imprint on the military. It had its own specific reasons, in addition to those resulting from the operational experience of World War II, for becoming extremely secretive. The memory of the purge of the Red Army in the late 1930's, when tens of thousands of officers were accused of espionage for foreign powers, gave the successive generations of officers a knee-jerk reaction against disclosing any information as a matter of self-protection. During World War II Stalin permitted very little contact between Soviet military officers and their counterparts in the Alliance. Soviet officers learned the hard way that such contacts, even in their official capacity, could bring them under suspicion. (Indeed, one of the characters in Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* is a Soviet navy officer imprisoned because of his officially assigned wartime work with the Royal Navy.)

Such attitudes have survived in the Soviet society well into the 1980's. For instance, during Yuriy Andropov's tenure as General Secretary (1982-1984) laws were passed forbidding Soviet citizens to render help (such as overnight lodgings) to foreign citizens and to share with them "professional" unclassified information.<sup>36</sup>

The advent of nuclear weapons and the Soviet experiences in 1941 have sharpened the Soviet military's interest in the "initial period of war."<sup>37</sup> If Germany armed with conventional weapons nearly succeeded in defeating the Soviet Union thanks to a successful employment of surprise, then a surprise attack with nuclear weapons could certainly bring one of the two superpowers down to its knees!<sup>38</sup> New conventional weapons, if kept secret, could also have an impact on the initial period of war critical for the final outcome of the war.<sup>39</sup> This logic certainly contributed to the Soviet emphasis on secrecy and strategic

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<sup>36</sup>For the English text of the latter law, see *Current Digest of Soviet Press*, vol. XXXVI, no. 8, p. 13.

<sup>37</sup>See, for instance, Army General S. P. Ivanov, *Nachal'nyy period voyny* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1974) *passim*.

<sup>38</sup>See Harriet Fast Scott and William F. Scott, *The Armed Forces of the USSR* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), 3rd edition, p. 41; Marshal V. Sokolovskiy, ed., *Voennaya strategiya* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1968) 3rd edition, p. 247; M. M. Kir'yan, *Problemy voennoy teorii v sovetskikh nauchno-spravochnykh izdaniyakh* (Moscow: Nauka, 1985), p. 124.

<sup>39</sup>Lt. General A. Yevseev, "O nekotorykh tendentsiyakh v izmenenii soderzhaniya i kharaktera nachal'nogo perioda voyny," *Voенно-istoricheskiy zhurnal*, Nove,ber 1985, no. 11, p. 17.



deception, two categories closely interrelated in the Soviet military art. Strategic deception is "carried out following decisions of the Supreme Command and includes a set of measures aimed at protecting the secrecy of strategic operations and campaigns, as well as disorienting the enemy in regard to the true intentions and actions of the armed forces."<sup>40</sup> [Emphasis added.] A Soviet military defector insisted that programs of strategic deception are managed a special Chief Directorate of Strategic Deception of the General Staff.<sup>41</sup>

Cloaking the military in a veil of secrecy also served an important political purpose. As noted perceptively by some analysts, Soviet military might has played an important domestic political role--that of conveying to the populace the idea of might of the Soviet regime, of its overwhelming power.<sup>42</sup> The power mystique was maintained for all its main components--the communist party, the KGB and the military--by shrouding them in secrecy, with their might occasionally and ritualistically revealed (e.g., at giant military parades) to the citizenry.

Secrecy has also been prompted by self-interest of the military. No bureaucracy likes the daylight, especially if it is has something to hide. The Soviet military have many problems resulting from mismanagement. There are great and unjustified disparities in standard of living between the members of the high command and the majority of the officers. There is lack of fairness and excessive favoritism in the system of promotions, etc., etc. All of this was conveniently hidden by military secrecy.

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<sup>40</sup>*Sovetskaya voennaya entsiklopediya* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1976-1980), vol. 5, p. 175.

<sup>41</sup>Victor Suvorov, "GUSM: The Soviet Service of Strategic Deception," *International Defense Review*, 1985, no. 8, n. 1237.

<sup>42</sup>Rebecca V. Strode and Colin S. Gray, "The Imperial Dimension of Soviet Military Power," *Problems of Communism*, November-December 1981, p. 11.

### 3. 2. Military Secrecy in Times of Change.

With the Marxist-Leninist ideology eroding, and the economy deteriorating, Gorbachev has been trying to integrate the USSR with the rest of the world in order to obtain economic benefits from cooperation with and greater openness to the West. He appears to have learned the lesson of detente that it is in the long-term impossible to achieve a significant level of such a cooperation without softening the traditionally threatening Soviet military posture.

At the same time, in order to shake up the vast bureaucracy and make reforms easier, Gorbachev permitted the public and media to criticize, sometimes harshly, various institutions and agencies, including the armed forces. Both of these sets of policies involved a change in established attitudes towards secrecy in the military. In addition, the Soviets have recognized that excessive secrecy is poor for public relations at a time when economic realities are demanding their improvement and arms control with the West.

*Glasnost'* has its history in the Russian military tradition. After the defeat in the Crimean war in 1855, the reformers of the Russian military establishment, led by the War Minister Dmitriy Milyutin, intended to use *glasnost'* to improve the conditions of the Russian military. They understood *glasnost'* as the right to discuss various problems of the military and to volunteer unorthodox opinions, especially by junior officers, to benefit the overburdened high command. This is close to the Soviet high command's view of military *glasnost'*. At the same time the XIXth century Russian military reformers worried, just as today's counterparts (see Section 3. 4.), that "incompetent" civilians would "abuse" *glasnost'* in meddling in the affairs of the military.<sup>43</sup>

The application of *glasnost'* to the Soviet military establishment has followed two different (although frequently crossing) tracks. The first track is that of new arms control

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<sup>43</sup>A. Senin, "O pol'ze glasnosti," *Voenno-istoricheskiy zhurnal*, 1989, no. 4, pp. 63-65.

and arms reduction policies, a part of Gorbachev's "new thinking" in foreign affairs. The first obvious application of the "new thinking" to military affairs was in September 1986 at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe. The Soviets signed its final Document which contained numerous provisions for limiting various military activities of European nations, East and West through constraints, notification, and verification by foreign observers.<sup>44</sup>

On May 29, 1987 the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO) released a communique from its Political Consultative Committee, which proclaimed, among other things, a defensive orientation for the Soviet and WTO military doctrines, and endorsed the concept of intrusive and all-embracing on-site inspections for verification of future nuclear and conventional arms control agreements.<sup>45</sup> This proclamation paved the way for signing in December 1987 of the INF Treaty with unprecedented provisions for on-site inspections of military and military-industrial installations on both sides--as well as for a triumphant visit by Mr. Gorbachev to the United States. Curtailing military secrecy has become a precondition for Mikhail Gorbachev's important foreign policy successes. Anxious for further improvement in their relations with the U.S., Foreign Minister Shevardnadze has supported in general terms President Bush's proposal for "open skies" to increase international trust and stability.<sup>46</sup>

The second track is that of public airing of problems in the Soviet military, such as poor living conditions, poor technical skills of officers and enlisted men, poor morale, hazing of conscripts, etc. This track is very much a part of the *glasnost*' campaign itself on the domestic scene, the policy of exposing and reducing shortcomings and abuses in the bureaucracy. The second track was apparent after the major embarrassment suffered by the

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<sup>44</sup>John Borawski, *From the Atlantic to the Urals. Negotiating Arms Control at the Stockholm Conference* (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey, 1988), pp. 221-237.

<sup>45</sup>*Pravda*, May 30, 1987.

<sup>46</sup>E. A. Shevardnadze, "General'nyy zamysel--mir, bezopasnost', garmoniya interesov," *Izvestiya*, September 27, 1989.



Soviet military when a young West German pilot managed to land his Cessna on Red Square in May of 1987.

In addition to agreeing to on-site inspections, the Soviets have begun to publish some data on their military spending, the share of the military in the space budget, selected tactical-technical characteristics of Soviet weapon systems, some maps without distortions, etc. Western officials, experts and journalists have been granted selective access to previously closely guarded military and military R&D facilities, such as the chemical weapons plant at Shikhany, the Tyuratam space center, etc. (See below.)

This military *glasnost*' has generated very considerable positive publicity in the West not because something drastically new has been learned so far, but because it looks so favorable in contrast to the previous Soviet grim obsession with secrecy. In reality, obsessive, and even absurd, secrecy has by no means been purged from the Soviet military. A handbook on rules of personal conduct distributed in 1989 to cadets in officer schools suggests that when on liberty they "should not speak with strangers," "should not discuss matters of life and work in the school" with civilians, and finding themselves in trouble "ask for help ... only from officials."<sup>47</sup> In such a context, the steps towards military *glasnost*' do seem truly sensational.

The system of military secrecy is still very much in place. For example, the military censorship continues to function as a department of the General Staff. (Symptomatically, it is located in the same building with the editorial offices of the Soviet military journals.) According to its commanding officer, Major General S. Filimonov, despite the relaxation of secrecy, "It is easier to say what is forbidden for publication than what is permitted;" i.e., the declassification apparently proceeds on a case-by-case basis. Further, he defines "military secrets" as:

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<sup>47</sup>S. Taranov, "Moy ruki, kursa t!" *Izvestiya*, October 16, 1989.

[I]nformation about the location of military units and groups of units, although more than 150 garrisons are open for the press. It is forbidden to disclose tables of troop organization, aspects of combat readiness, secret samples of weapons and military hardware.<sup>48</sup>

Until the introduction of the new Law on the Press on August 1, 1990, the Soviet official press could not publish anything about the military without the prior approval of military censorship.<sup>49</sup> The situation is less clear now. The same Maj. Gen. Filimonov has said that military censors will review already published materials, act through law enforcement agencies to punish the mass media for giving away military secrets, and "develop a standard document on the protection of secrets in the mass media." In short, he would issue the kind of paralegal acts which until now have contributed greatly to maintenance of excessive secrecy and the concealment of information.<sup>50</sup>

Although some accurate maps have been printed, there are many limitations on further publications. According to the the chief of the Military Topography Department of the General Staff, Major General A. I. Losev, the military are against declassifying topographic maps of scale 1:100,000 and larger because it would be too difficult and costly for a foreign power to recreate such maps on its own and because satellite photography does not permit establishing the exact location of objects photographed without such maps. Gen. Losev also defended continuing the classification of some XVIIIth century and even earlier maps for military reasons!<sup>51</sup>

The pressure for change, however, has apparently left the military censorship somewhat disoriented. For instance, in a recent interview Soviet navy C-in-C ADM Chernavin referred to the new *Tbilisi* "aircraft carrier," now being outfitted in the Black

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<sup>48</sup>V. Litovkin, "Voennaya tsenz ira: chto mozjno i chego nel'zja," *Izvestiya*, November 26, 1989.

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup>Maj. Gen. S. Filimonov, "Star it li tsenzory bezrabortnymy?" *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 12, 1990.

<sup>51</sup>V. Zyubin, "Raskroem karty," *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 22, 1989.

Sea. *Pravda* published his statement despite the fact that it was bound to create diplomatic difficulties for the Soviet Union. The Montreaux Convention bans passage of aircraft carriers via the Turkish straits. In several days *Pravda* had to publish a lame "correction," calling the *Tbilisi* "a heavy aircraft carrying cruiser."<sup>52</sup>

The reform of the classification code is to make it more modern, not to abolish it. The military has not ended its traditional inability to discriminate between verification of arms control agreements and espionage.<sup>53</sup> The Ministry of Defense daily newspaper has warned that the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency is using *glasnost* for gathering information about the Soviet Armed Forces and included in the same context verification activities related to the INF Treaty. The same article, characteristically entitled *Perestroika, Glasnost' ... Espionage*, expresses concern about alleged American emphasis on human intelligence because intelligence gathered by national technical means (NTM) is insufficient for a well rounded assessment of such factors as personnel quality and morale, as well as of weapons still on the drawing board.<sup>54</sup> This implicitly counterbalances the notion (present in "the new thinking") that the development of NTM has made secrecy itself obsolete, and serves as a reminder that personal contacts between Soviet military personnel and the U. S. arms control inspectors are a source of danger and must therefore be strictly monitored to prevent a leakage of "secrets."

The article also expresses concern about "excessive *glasnost*," when Soviet scientists and scholars allegedly simply give away to American participants at various conferences information which "is highly useful for a smart specialist." This remark is particularly interesting because it broadens the interpretation of what is a secret instead of narrowing it down, as "the new thinking" suggests. Rather than treating a secret as

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<sup>52</sup>V. N. Chernavin, "Kommentariy Glavnokomanduyushchego Voenno-Morskim Flotom strany admirala flota V. N. Chernavina," *Pravda* October 19, 1989; for the "correction" see *Pravda*, October 22, 1989.

<sup>53</sup>On this traditional approach, see Mikhail Tsyppkin, *Why Wouldn't the Soviets Cheat in Arms Control?* (Arlington, VA: System Planning Corp., 1987), pp. III-9, III-10.

<sup>54</sup>V. Doronin, "Perestroika, glasnost' ... shpionazh," *Krasnaya zvezda*, May 11, 1989.



something clearly designated as such, this approach moves backward to the typical Soviet "whatever is not expressly permitted, is forbidden," and to Andropov's law (mentioned earlier) making communication of professional unclassified information to foreigners a crime.

Concern about protection of military secrecy under conditions of *glasnost'* has also been voiced by KGB Major General I. Ustinov. In a recent interview he gave numerous examples of alleged American intelligence gathering activity by NTM. Gen. Ustinov demanded that industrial ministries and agencies, individual workers and scientists evaluate specific needs for protecting their secrets and follow the rules for handling secrets without any deviations.<sup>55</sup> Similar attitudes have been expressed even more forcefully by the Soviet Navy's monthly *Morskoy Sbornik*, which has recently attacked every and any activity that gives or might give the West access to truthful information about the Soviet military: from Western visits to Soviet military facilities, to the publication of articles on military morale in Soviet newspapers, to frank discussions of the MIKE submarine disaster in the mass media, to greater freedom of travel and emigration.<sup>56</sup>

Such concerns conflict with a statement made recently by Gen. Yazov, who proposed that East and West move towards "transparency (*transparentnost'*) in the military field--that is, the maximum possible openness..."<sup>57</sup>

### 3. 3. Military *Glasnost'* and the West: Some Case Studies.

The Soviets have permitted on-site inspection of facilities associated with destruction, deployment and production of missiles under the INF Treaty. Some of the

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<sup>55</sup>Yu. Dmitriev, "I vse zhe nas podslushivayut," *Trud*, October 11, 1989.

<sup>56</sup>Col. V. Nikolaev, "Glasnost' i tayna," *Morskoy sbornik*, 1990, no. 7 pp. 8-10.

<sup>57</sup>D. Yazov, "Novaya model' bezopasnosti i Vooruzhennye sily," *Kommunist*, December 1989, no. 18, p. 68.



information disclosed in the process (deployment areas and basing patterns) is largely irrelevant because the missiles in question will no longer be deployed, and because access to former deployment areas will hardly reveal much that satellite intelligence has not. Still, inspectors' access to production facilities and observations of deployment areas are likely to help U.S. intelligence in the detection of possible future non-compliance by the Soviets. The much greater concern of the Soviets, however, might be (a) contacts between Soviet and American military personnel and (b) possible constraints on obvious changes in activities by defense industrial enterprises where U.S. inspectors are stationed or can pay a surprise visit.

In this case, the Soviets are not giving away any existing important secrets, but rather exposing to considerable stress their well established habits of shielding their military from Western contacts, and operating their defense industry without constraint. The great importance of INF Treaty for Soviet national interest (as understood by Gorbachev and his group) is that it removed the remnants of an unsuccessful military-political operation (the SS-20 deployment and associated "peace movement" activities) from the international scene. Moreover, the Soviet concessions in matters of U. S. access are a bit less dramatic than they seem at first glance: a) current conversion of the defense industry is likely to make at least some defense factories less "secret" anyway; and b) the 13 years during which inspections will be permitted might seem a long time to Americans who are used to short cycles between change (four years between presidential elections, frequent moves from one locale to another, wide fluctuations of the business cycle, etc.), but not to Soviets who, until recently, have been used to a slow pace of change. It should also be noticed that the term of 13 years must be also close to the average term for research-to-production cycle for new Soviet weapons. The decision to build the first Soviet aircraft carrier, the *Tbilisi*, which began operational tests in 1989, was made in 1976--thirteen years ago.<sup>58</sup> By the

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<sup>58</sup>Chernavin, "Kommentariy Glavkomanduyushchego."

time the new generation of weapons being conceived now reaches the assembly line and political-military objectives of the INF Treaty are fulfilled, the U.S. will no longer be able to inspect selected defense production facilities.

Under the policy of military *glasnost*, the Soviets have recently given, on a unilateral basis, access to Soviet military facilities to Western officials, experts and journalists outside of the framework of any existing arms control treaty. Let us look closely at several such recent cases of access. In July 1989 a group of U.S. Congressmen and "independent scientists" were allowed to visit the Sary Shagan BMD proving ground. There they saw a Soviet laser which the visitors described (contrary to what had been suggested by several earlier editions of the Department of Defense *Soviet Military Power*) as incapable of damaging U.S. satellites, antiquated and relatively primitive. One of the visiting scientists, the Princeton physicist Frank von Hippel, said that the laser had very outdated computers and was so crude that "a two-year college in the United States could produce the same in one of its laboratories."<sup>59</sup>

The American visitors to the laser installation did not get answers to any of their specific questions (when exactly was the laser designed and built? how could the Soviets amplify their claim that it is to be used only for satellite tracking?). They were not allowed to visit any other installations in the area and did not have their questions answered about such installations. How useful was the visit? One should not be too quick to denigrate the capabilities of Soviet weapons only because they look shoddy and use some hardware obsolete by American standards. Making capable (although less so than the best Western counterparts) systems out of inferior components has been the trademark of the Soviet military R&D system for decades. Indeed, if we are to believe Academician Yevgeniy Velikhov, the Soviet laser was of the same type as the one recently used by the U.S. Air Force to track space objects, and the Soviets used their laser for the same purpose last

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<sup>59</sup>R. Jeffrey Smith, "Soviet Laser Said to Pose No Threat," *The Washington Post*, July 9, 1989.

year.<sup>60</sup> As for the outdated computers, a 1985 publication by the U.S. Department of Defense made it quite clear that the Soviet BMD effort is seriously hampered by lack of advanced computer technology.<sup>61</sup> Confirming this assessment based on NTM data has been undoubtedly useful, but the visit has apparently done little to increase our understanding of the direction of Soviet BMD research and development.

Another visit by American specialists to a classified gas laser facility at a branch of the Kurchatov Institute of Atomic Energy had similar results. The Americans concluded that the Soviet laser, which blasted a sheet of metal in their presence, had an impressive power level, but little direct military significance.<sup>62</sup> This observation supports the statements made nearly five years ago by the Department of Defense, which credited the Soviet gas laser with "impressive" output power, and dated possible deployment of laser weapons not earlier than the late 1990's--early 2000's. The implication was that currently available Soviet gas lasers have no direct military significance.<sup>63</sup> Soviet scientists at the facility said that the visit was arranged to reassure the West that the Soviets were interested in peaceful rather than military applications of lasers, that nevertheless the gas laser was paid for by the Ministry of Defense, that the scientists at the Kurchatov Institute were skeptical about the military utility of the gas laser, but that the military did not believe [the scientists'] words."<sup>64</sup>

These claims by Soviet scientists might be true, but they as well might not. Does a branch of the Kurchatov Institute build lasers only to prove to the military, which does not believe "words," that they are poor weapons? Is this what the military is paying for? Will the laser laboratory continue to accept military contracts despite the scientists' skepticism?

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<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup>*Soviet Strategic Defense Programs* (Department of Defense, October 1985), p. 16.

<sup>62</sup>Michael E. Gordon, "U.S. Visitors See Soviet Laser Firing," *The New York Times*, August 17, 1989.

<sup>63</sup>*Soviet Strategic Defense Programs*, pp. 13, 14.

<sup>64</sup>Gordon, "U.S. Visitors See Soviet Laser Firing."



What is happening in a lab next door? Indeed, the Soviet scientists "did not discuss in detail their work on chemical or free electron lasers..."<sup>65</sup>

Since such questions were not answered, the visit to the laser lab at the Kurchatov Institute did not resolve our concerns about the Soviet military laser program, although it confirmed U.S. intelligence data. It should also be noted that the American request to visit a Soviet laser facility near the city of Dushanbe in Central Asia, which has been a source of much concern to the U.S., was rejected, a curious fact given that the Soviets have insisted that this facility is for peaceful purposes only.<sup>66</sup>

An American group that visited a command center of the Soviet Strategic Rocket Forces was surprised to find out that it was only 20 feet underground. (The 1988 edition of *Soviet Military Power* by the U.S. Department of Defense provided detailed descriptions of super-hardened and super-deep Soviet Supreme Command nuclear war underground facilities. After that, could the Soviets really doubt that the outdated SS-11 command center's depth was a secret from the U.S.?) Indeed, the Americans were allowed to visit only a command center for the ageing SS-11's, which are being retired, and the Soviet military officers refused to discuss any other types of missiles and any arrangements for them. The Americans could also not tell how many missiles were deployed at the missile field which they visited.<sup>67</sup> Given the careful observation of activities associated with Soviet ICBM's by U.S. NTM in order to verify compliance with existing arms control agreements and to prepare data for future ones, one might suspect that the American visitors to the SS-11 command center did not learn any new and important facts. There was one exception: the Soviets tried hard to reassure the U.S. about the Soviet launching

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<sup>65</sup>*Ibid*,

<sup>66</sup>Michael E. Gordon, "Congressional Visitors Learn Limits on Glasnost," *The New York Times*, August 28, 1989. On the laser facility near Dushanbe, see William J. Broad, "New Clues on a Soviet Laser Complex," *The New York Times*, October 23, 1987.

<sup>67</sup>Gordon, "U.S. Visitors See Soviet Laser Firing."



procedures. They were at pains to show that these procedures exclude unauthorized release.<sup>68</sup>

During a visit of a U.S. Congressional delegation to the Sevastopol naval base on the Black Sea, a Soviet admiral "disclosed," in the words of an American newspaper report, "significant details" about the *Tbilisi* aircraft carrier then readied for sea trials. It is to have catapults for launching jets, will not be nuclear powered, and will probably carry SU-27 FLANKER jets.<sup>69</sup> These disclosures, however, hardly enhanced the state of U.S. knowledge on the subject. The 1987 edition of *Soviet Military Power* suggested that the *Tbilisi* will be equipped with catapults and probably carry FLANKER's on the basis of observation of Soviet activities at Saki naval airfield near the Black Sea. The same publication, normally not given to ignoring anything that increases Soviet power projection capabilities, did not mention the possibility of nuclear propulsion for the *Tbilisi*, which suggests that its conventional propulsion had been no secret from U.S. intelligence even then.<sup>70</sup> When the Congressional delegation, however, asked for permission to visit the Nikolaevsk shipyard, where the *Tbilisi* is being outfitted, and where other major surface combatants are built, the request was denied.<sup>71</sup>

A similar example concerns letting Western journalists visit a "secret" city which has served as the center of Soviet nuclear weapons industry. Its reactor facilities are going to be closed, the technology used there is not secret from the United States, and the location of the city is not "secret". There is a similar pattern in a 1988 visit to the Shikhany chemical weapons factory. The Soviets must have assumed that the West knew about the facility (just as the location of a biological weapons facility in Sverdlovsk, made famous by an anthrax outbreak there was no secret to the West). The West also knew that the Soviets

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<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup>Gordon, "Congressional Visitors Learn Limits on Glasnost."

<sup>70</sup>*Soviet Military Power 1987* (U.S. Government Printing Office, March 1987), p. 86.

<sup>71</sup>Gordon, "Congressional Visitors Learn Limits on Glasnost."

produce chemical weapons, and had a general knowledge of what kind of chemical weapons are most widespread in the Soviet arsenal.

Thus, the Soviets are allowing Western access to their military "secrets"

- When Western intelligence services already have substantial information on the subject or are likely to obtain such information in the future;
- When revealing information advances Soviet national interests, helps deflate Western estimates or at least strengthen the Soviet public relations position;
- When a visit can really NOT help the West come to any definite conclusion about Soviet capabilities beyond what the West already knows.

A prime example is the 1988 visit by an American Congressional delegation to the site of the much debated Krasnoyarsk large phased array radar. Some conclusions reportedly drawn by the American visitors were irrelevant to the central issue, namely that the radar was a violation of the ABM Treaty, as finally confirmed by the Soviets in 1989. The radar did not look hardened for battle-management. How could they know for sure since it was only half-finished? The workmanship looked shoddy--but what Soviet workmanship doesn't? Indeed, those American visitors who came away believing (correctly) that the radar was a violation, did so because of the north-eastern orientation of the radar and its location deep inside the Soviet territory, which made it unsuitable for anything but an ABM mission.<sup>72</sup> Such information, however, had been provided years earlier by American satellite intelligence.

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<sup>72</sup>William J. Broad, "Inside a Key Russian Radar Site: Tour Raises Questions on Treaty," the *New York Times*, September 7, 1987; William J. Broad, "Soviet Radar on Display," the *New York Times*, September 9, 1987; David K. Shipler, "Americans Who Saw Soviet Radar Unsure If It Violates Pact," the *New York Times*, September 9, 1987.

### 3. 4. Military *Glasnost'* and Deception.

Can deception be carried out under the cover of the military *glasnost'*? Several factors require analysis here: the Soviet political culture, the military's attitudes to the role of deception in military affairs, and the ability of the Soviet public itself to obtain information on military matters.

Despite Gen. Yazov's professed desire for military transparency, and despite the increased potential of technical intelligence, the Soviet military apparently has not written deception off altogether. A lengthy review of the latest deception means allegedly developed by the U. S. Armed Forces, published by the Ministry of Defense daily, ignores a point, so important to "the new thinkers," that deception is destabilizing. The implication of the article entitled *The Trojan Horses of the Pentagon* is that deception is an integral part of military training and weapons acquisition (after all, the Greeks won the Trojan war thanks to their use of this means of deception!)<sup>73</sup>

Military *glasnost'* cannot exclude deception and under certain circumstances may even facilitate it. Military *glasnost'* is likely to reduce Western suspiciousness and desire to question Soviet behavior in every minimally ambiguous instance. Military *glasnost'* practiced together with a series of arms control agreements overextends the Western intelligence/verification capabilities (something the Soviet have already noticed).<sup>74</sup> The need to observe so many Soviet facilities and activities combined with the improved "atmospherics" and defense budget cuts may limit the ability of the West to look at activities and facilities beyond the *glasnost'*/arms control framework, which opens up possibilities for deception.

But how likely are the Soviets to conduct a program of strategic deception (that is, a series of activities to change the Soviet-American correlation of forces in the Kremlin's

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<sup>73</sup>V. Trofimov, "'Troyanskie koni' Pentagona," *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 3, 1989.

<sup>74</sup>Doronin, "Perestroika, glasnost' ... shpionazh."



favor) now? Until very recently they were engaged in a program of strategic deception to obtain an edge in ballistic missile defense over the United States via construction of the Krasnoyarsk radar. Having admitted the illegality of this activity, the Soviets, in effect, admitted a failure of this strategic deception program which had succeeded only in mobilizing the United States for the Strategic Defense Initiative and had made the Soviets confront their own technological and economic weakness when contemplating a BMD race against the U.S. This case hardly encourages them to begin new strategic deception programs now. For such a program, one needs a strategy--and that the Soviets lack in the whirlwind of barely controlled political change of today. The strategic confusion of the Soviet political-military leadership makes a long-term plan of strategic deception unlikely, but it also creates conditions for misunderstanding or deception capable of straining international relations in the future. The Soviet "defensive doctrine" is a case in point.

### *3. 4. 1. Military Glasnost' and Defensive Doctrine.*

In the past, the Soviet declaratory doctrine differed widely from the reality of their operational planning on several significant occasions. Since the mid-1970's, the Soviet top politicians proclaimed nuclear war to be unwinnable. But now we are told by no less a figure than Dr. Vadim Zagladin, for many years Deputy Chief of International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, that all these years the Soviet Union, although certainly not looking for an opportunity to fight a nuclear war, made its military plans on the basis "of a possibility of victory in a nuclear war."<sup>75</sup> In the same period, the Soviets denied that they were seeking world military hegemony. But in 1986 Mr. Gorbachev criticized Soviet military policy of his predecessors as seeking to match the

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<sup>75</sup>"Vneshnyaya politika i perestroika," *Izvestiya*, June 27, 1988.



combined military power of "any possible coalition" that is, of the United States, Western Europe, Japan and China--which is a quest for global military domination.<sup>76</sup>

Today Western analysts are faced with a puzzle of Gorbachev's "defensive" military doctrine: a concept which presupposes that neither party to a possible conflict has enough forces to attack but both have sufficient military strength to defend themselves. There appears to be a relationship between "the defensive doctrine" and military *glasnost*. Secrecy is destabilizing, according to the new thinking, because it creates a fear of attack, something which the defensive doctrine is supposed to dispel.<sup>77</sup> Since the Soviets are already making some unilateral steps towards defensive military posture (reduction of forces and of content of tanks in the forces, elimination of bridging and assault equipment in Eastern Europe) without demanding changes in the NATO force posture, the underlying Soviet assumption must be, as proposed by some Soviet civilian analysts, that the danger of conventional invasion of the USSR from the West is practically non-existent.<sup>78</sup>

The defensive doctrine, however, might become a source of misunderstanding at best, and deception at worst in the Soviet-American security relationship. The Soviet High Command appears to be confused about the meaning of defensive doctrine. According to the Chief of General Staff Army General M. Moiseev, a shift to defensive doctrine involves "giving the Armed Forces a non-offensive structure: maximum limitation within [the Armed Forces] of strike weapon systems; change of the orientation of deployment areas towards the implementation of strictly defensive tasks; reduction of the mobilization plans of the Armed Forces, as well as of volume of military production."<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Cited in "Doklad E. A. Shevardnadze," p. 36.

<sup>77</sup>See, for instance, Shevardnadze, "General'nyy zamysel--mir," and A Kokoshin, "Razvitie voennogo dela i sokrashchenie vooruzhennykh sil i obychnykh vooruzheniy," *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya*, 1988, no. 1, p. 28.

<sup>78</sup>See V. Zhurkin, S. Karaganov, A. Kortunov, "Vyzovy bezopasnosti--starye i novye," *Kommunist*, 1988, no. 1, 44-46.

<sup>79</sup>Army Gen. M. Moiseev, "Sovetskaya voennaya doktrina: realizatsiya ee oboronitel'noy napravlenosti," *Pravda*, March 13, 1989.

At first look this definition seems to be straightforward enough. But statements by Soviet high-ranking military officers and defense industry executives testify to the problems they have understanding the implications of defensive doctrine. Take the concept of defensive sufficiency. In a September 1989 speech, no less a figure than the Soviet Minister of Defense Army General Dmitriy Yazov warned against forgetting the experience of the Nazi invasion of 1941 ("We should not allow its repetition."), and continued: "...we must have not only sufficient but also **unconditionally reliable defense...**"<sup>80</sup> [Emphasis added.] But what kind of defensive sufficiency and related military openness can be practiced if you anticipate an all-out attack and want to have an absolute military guarantee of repelling it?!

Take the concept of defensive character of military strategy. Gen. Moiseev says that **in the initial period of war** Soviet operations will be defensive in nature, although the enemy would not be allowed to have the initiative.<sup>81</sup> [Emphasis added.] The apparent implication is that once the initial period of war is over, and the enemy is stopped, the Soviet forces would go on an offensive. Still, the forces required for the eventual offensive might have to be structured and armed accordingly, which would contradict the proclaimed defensive restructuring of the Soviet Armed Forces.

Even more confusing is the concept of eliminating the "strike weapons" with outstanding offensive characteristics. Soviet navy C-in-C Fleet Admiral Chernavin, for instance, proclaimed the first true Soviet aircraft carrier, *Tbilisi*, to be a defensive weapon:

...when we are asked today whether building aircraft carriers contradicts our defensive doctrine, my answer is: no. We see their main mission as carrying fighter aircraft, which can provide cover to our ships at a great distance where shore-based fighter aviation is of no help. This defensive mission is integral to the new *Tbilisi* aircraft carrier...But what does defensive mean? Some people understand it in a simplistic and primitive way. They think that once we have adopted

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<sup>80</sup>Army Gen. D. T. Yazov, "Arm'ya družby i bratstva narodov," *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 22, 1989.

<sup>81</sup>Moiseev, "Sovetskaya voennaya doktrina."

such a doctrine, we can be only a passive side, to be on the defensive, to retreat in case of conflict into the depth of our territory. But modern war--on land, at sea, and in the air--is above all the war of maneuver. How can a combat ship fight while "sitting in a trench?" A submarine must find and sink the enemy. The mission of surface ships is, when necessary, to launch missile strikes against the enemy without waiting for him to enter our territorial waters.<sup>82</sup>

Chernavin's statement illustrates the predicament the Soviet military finds itself in trying to determine which types of operations and weapons are defensive. Some Soviet spokesmen betray open self-interest in their definitions. For instance, a deputy general designer of the Tupolev aircraft "firm," A. Kandalov, described the TU-160 Blackjack strategic bomber as a defensive weapon because it has been allegedly designed "as a counterweight" to the American B-1 strategic bomber!<sup>83</sup>

**These examples do not mean that the defensive doctrine is planned as a strategic deception of the West.** They rather indicate the degree of confusion among Soviet military planners about the nature of the new doctrine they are supposed to implement, and their general reluctance to give much more than a lip service to the new idea which runs against their corporate interests because it leads to force reductions and cuts in weapons acquisitions. A possible future consequence of this confusion/reluctance might be that the Soviets will end up concealing non-compliance with some of their own more far-fetched pledges of "defensive restructuring" made in arms control negotiations or unilaterally to provide more ammunition to Gorbachev's diplomatic offensive.

The following anecdote related by the Ministry of Defense daily illustrates the predicament presented to both the Soviets and the West by the defensive doctrine.:

When NCO Staroverov was asked by a BBC reporter [during a visit by NATO inspectors accompanied by journalists] whether his subunit was training according to the new doctrine, he initially ... said: "No, everything is as it

<sup>82</sup> Chernavin, "Kommentariy Glavnokomanduyushchego."

<sup>83</sup> V. Izgarshev et al., "Oni ostav' vyut avtografy v nebe," *Pravda*, August 18, 1989.



was." And only when he understood what was meant, he started explaining that we have always paid great attention to defense and did not plan to attack anyone.<sup>84</sup>

It is difficult for the Soviets to avoid such embarrassments, but it is even more difficult for the West to figure out whether such an embarrassment is rooted in confusion--or in deception.

### 3. 4. 2. *Glasnost', Deception and Soviet Military Press.*

The confusion in Soviet military thinking might be responsible for a curious lull in military publishing activity. Throughout the 1980's, the Soviet military put out a substantial number of books dealing with various aspects of military doctrine and strategy. These books without exception were characterized by a typical hard-line world view, a poorly concealed recognition of the validity of nuclear war-fighting, and by an emphasis on the role of Soviet military power in East-West relations and in Third World crises.<sup>85</sup> From the mid-1988, this stream suddenly and inexplicably dried up. Throughout 1987 and 1988 the military periodicals hotly (and not always favorably) debated various aspects of the defensive doctrine, but by 1988 these debates seem to have been silenced. Is it possible that the Soviets have begun to classify their military writings in order to avoid embarrassing Gorbachev's diplomacy and to deceive the West about the real direction of Soviet military thought, quite different from the postulates of the "new thinking"?

<sup>84</sup>N. Panyukov, "Praporshchik Staroverov otvechaet B-bi-si," *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 23, 1989.

<sup>85</sup>Just to list a few: M. A. Gareev, *Frunze--voennyi teoretik* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1985); N. V. Ogarkov, *Istoriya uchit bditel'nosti* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1985); S. A. Tyushkevich, *Voyna i sovremennost'* (Moscow: Nauka, 1986); Yu. Kirshin et al., *Politicheskoe sodержanie sovremennykh voyn* (Moscow: Nauka, 1987); V. T. Login et al., *Opyt voyn v zashchitu sotsialisticheskogo otechestva* (Moscow: Nauka, 1985); S. I. Radzievskiy, ed., *Militarizm--ugroza miru i tsivilizatsii* (Moscow: Nauka, 1987); P. A. Zhilin, ed., *Istoriya voennogo iskusstva* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1986); F. F. Gayvorosnkiy, ed., *Evolystiya voennogo iskusstva* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1987); N. P. Vyunenko et al., *Voенно-morskoy flot: rol', perspektivy razvitiya, ispol'zovanie* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1988).



The Soviets are obviously aware that their doctrinal writings may (and sometimes do) cause a stir in the West. The Ministry of Defense daily angrily denounced the conclusions about the continuing Soviet interest in nuclear warfighting drawn by the French Sovietologist Alain Besançon from several recent books written by Soviet military officers.<sup>86</sup> It is impossible to guarantee that the current silence is not the sign of a deception scheme. The Soviet military is a bureaucracy shell-shocked by the pace of events in the Soviet empire. The absence of major published research on the military doctrine is most likely the result of the general confusion, and negative feelings, among the military concerning Gorbachev's doctrinal innovations, and the only sensible alternative to directly challenging the General Secretary, who has recently fired a Minister of Defense and removed all Marshals of the Soviet Union (except for Defense Minister Yazov) from actual policy-making positions.

The Soviets have recently opened to foreign subscription the monthly journal of the General Staff, *Voennaya Mysl'* (Military Thought), previously circulated for official use only. This action, in line with other declassification steps taken by the Soviets, is not as bold and altruistic as it might seem: the Soviets must have known that the U.S. intelligence community has regularly obtained *Voennaya Mysl'* (because large selections of translations from that periodical had been published by the U.S. government) and lately (since 1973) kept it to itself. Now the intelligence community will have to contend with interpretations of the latest Soviet doctrinal pronouncements by any academic who has invested \$45 in an annual subscription to the journal. Still, the *Voennaya Mysl'* of the era of military *glasnost'* is likely to become less informative than its restricted predecessor: "They'll spoil the journal and turn it into something like the *Journal of Military History*," was a comment of a retired Soviet general now at an Academy of Sciences research institute to an analyst at

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<sup>86</sup>Lt. General V. Serebryannikov, "Fal'shivka s dal'nim pritsem," *Krasnaya zvezda*, November 1, 1987. Two Soviet books in question have been referenced above: Tyushkevich, *Voyna i sovremennost'*, and Kirshin et al., *Politicheskoe soderzhanie sovremennykh voyn*.

Rand corporation.<sup>87</sup> (The *Journal of Military History* published by the Ministry of Defense deals with of contemporary military issues in a very indirect way, usually by allusion to historical examples.)

### 3. 4. 3. *Deception in Science and Military R&D.*

One of the postulates of the "new thinking" is that military strength is becoming increasingly dependent on the pace of scientific and technological developments rather than on numbers of men and stockpiles of weapons. The military appears to have in principle agreed with this position.<sup>88</sup> The importance of protecting secrets in science and technology was emphasized in 1989 by the then Chairman of the Committee on Defense and State Security of the Supreme Soviet Prof. Vladimir Lapygin. (On this committee, see below.)

It is in the area of science and research and development that preservation of secrecy makes deception possible. As a Soviet military author notes, "the intertwining of research and development, design, assembly and testing ... makes it possible to camouflage even more thoroughly the real military expenditures in the budgets of 'civilian' agencies."<sup>89</sup> (The Soviet author referred to alleged practices of the United States, but this appears to be the classical stylistic device in Soviet military writings of pointing at the U. S. while discussing the USSR.)

Such dangers were foreseen by the late Dr. Andrei Sakharov, who expressed concern in one of his last interviews about "very, very many [future weapons] which are still kept in the labs without anyone even knowing anything about them." Sakharov noted that "a ban on research and development can never be possible and effective," and

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<sup>87</sup>Information provided by an analyst with Rand Corp.

<sup>88</sup>"Doklad E. A. Shevardnadze," p. 36; Col. S. A. Bartenev, *Ekonomicheskoe protivoborstvo v voyne* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1986), p. 8

<sup>89</sup>Bartenev, *Ekonomicheskoe protivoborstvo*, pp. 113, 114.

suggested that military R&D projects "become open as soon as their development reaches a certain level."<sup>90</sup> Indeed, as some Soviet civilian academic analysts point out, no informed public debate on military affairs can take place as long as there are no data published on weapons acquisition programs, including future weapons.<sup>91</sup> A reformist People's Deputy and member of the Supreme Soviet Committee on Defense and State Security writer Vasil' Bykov, has already warned that the conversion of the Soviet defense industry is "hypocritical verbiage behind which certain circles are planning new armaments programs."<sup>92</sup> Member of the Presidential Council, Aleksandr Yakovlev, has said that the the defense industry is the focus of resistance to change and continues to enjoy its privileged status even amidst today's economic crisis.<sup>93</sup>

The United States should be aware of the clear limitations of *glasnost'* when it comes to science and military R&D, as well as the potential for deception in this area. Indeed, it was shown earlier that the least conclusive and revealing of all the military *glasnost'* activities were those involving access to R&D facilities .

### 3. 4. 4. *Glasnost', Deception and Political Culture.*

The Soviet political culture, embodied in the attitudes, decision-making patterns and habits of thought of the Soviet elite, is a very important factor in determining the parameters of military *glasnost'*. A former scholar at the KGB Research Institute recently said that the political culture of the Soviet elite has been shaped by the elite's "usurpation" of political power from the "masses. " As a result the former find it necessary to monopolize all

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<sup>90</sup>Grigoriy Tsitrinyak, "Stepen' svobody," *Ogonyok*, 1989, no. 31, p. 29.

<sup>91</sup>See, for instance, Aleksei Izyumov, "Voennoy glasnosti ne khvataet otkrovennosti," *Moskovskie novosti*, September 10, 1989.

<sup>92</sup>Vasil' Bykov, "Prorok v svoem otechestve," *Moskovskie novosti*, February 18, 1990.

<sup>93</sup>*Radio Liberty Daily Report*, no. 186 September 28, 1990.



channels of information. Keeping the "masses" uninformed is "a crucial condition for the covert realization of [the elite's] political interests."<sup>94</sup> (The author of this quote was fired from the KGB after publishing an article calling for removal of many secrecy barriers in Soviet society--a fine illustration of the importance of secrecy to the elite's political culture!)<sup>95</sup> Thus secretiveness and deception are integral to the political culture of the Soviet elite. This political culture, as Gorbachev has noted on a number of occasions, cannot be changed overnight.

Of course, the Soviet bureaucracy does not hold a world monopoly on deception and cover-ups in the of national security and other spheres. What makes the Soviet case outstanding among developed nations, however, is the combination of elite arrogance when it comes to handling information and the lack of Russian/Soviet tradition of the rule of law and of a government accountable to the public. "Until the 1860s Russian jurisprudence did not even recognize the distinction between laws, decrees, and administrative ordinances..."<sup>96</sup> A Soviet legal expert recently remarked that in the USSR there "has not been a state of law even for one day."<sup>97</sup> A respected Soviet journalist writing on legal matters recently thus characterized an average Soviet official's attitude to law: "In their consciousness there is neither the slightest concept of law, nor understanding of it, nor fear of it..."<sup>98</sup> Simply listing the examples of most blatant, even naive, law breaking by Soviet officials revealed under *glasnost'*, would take up many volumes.

This is important because arms control agreements are legal acts, and officials who are not used at least to keeping the distinction between legal and illegal actions in the back of their minds, are likely to treat arms control agreements not much better than their own laws. It is only fair to say that when it comes to national security, few nations would feel

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<sup>94</sup>V. Rubanov, "Demokratiya i bezopasnost' strany," p. 45.

<sup>95</sup>Natalya Gevorkyan, "Otkrovenost' vozmozhna, lish' kogda za tobey zakroyetsya dver'," *Moskovskie novosti*, June 24, 1990.

<sup>96</sup>Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Old Regime* (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1974), p. 289.

<sup>97</sup>Arkadiy Vaksberg in "Kakim dolzhno byt' pravovoe gosudarstvo?" *Literaturnaya gazeta*, June 8, 1988.

<sup>98</sup>Ol'ga Chaykovskaya, "Sproti lenie," *Literaturnaya gazeta*, November 26, 1986.



completely bound by international law if their perceived interests are threatened. This tendency, however, would be even more pronounced in the Soviet Union where, in addition to the general contempt for law, national security has always been treated as an extralegal matter.

A very important case of bureaucratic deception has been the nuclear disaster in Chernobyl and its consequences. When the reactor at the Chernobyl nuclear power station exploded, the local officials tried to conceal the disaster and produced rosy assessments for their superiors until the arrival of a high-level investigating commission from Moscow.<sup>99</sup> While this commission quickly established the true facts for the Soviet leadership, the latter attempted to hide the reality from the Soviet and international public, a policy which backfired embarrassingly because of modern space-based and other information gathering systems: a graphic proof, if the Soviet leaders needed one, of how dated their secrecy policy was.

Once the dimensions of the disaster were supposedly acknowledged, **and the Soviets received lavish international praise for their "unprecedented openness," a marathon deception of the public began.** For three years a threatening radiation situation in Belorussia, the Ukraine and the Bryansk province of the Russian Federation was concealed. It took the authorities three years to acknowledge that one third of Belorussian territory had been affected by radiation from the Chernobyl accident. The deception was perpetrated primarily by the agencies responsible for health care and the environment!

Decisions were made to classify information on radiation levels in populated areas when it was higher than acceptable, and on negative health consequences for personnel involved in emergency work at Chernobyl. Military physicians were forbidden to mention in case histories that their patients had worked on the Chernobyl cleanup unless they had

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<sup>99</sup>G. Medvedev, "Nekompetentnost'," *Kommunist*, 1989, no. 4, pp. 98-103.

suffered an acute case of radiation poisoning. Orders classifying radiation data secret were issued as late as 1989!

It is noteworthy that the Soviet critics of government deception in the Chernobyl case are deeply concerned about the Soviet bureaucrats' use of Western experts who support official positions without understanding the Soviet reality. In one case, an expert of the World Health Organization was allegedly told by Soviet officials that inhabitants of Belorussian villages severely poisoned by radiation are not resettled because it is cheaper to supply them with all the food they need from other areas of the country (local agricultural products are dangerously radioactive). When told by local citizens that in reality there are not enough supplies of "clean" food and that they have to mix it with local radioactive food, the Western expert simply refused to believe it!<sup>100</sup>

In a political culture where generations of bureaucrats have been raised without any sense of accountability, patently false information is given to the public at home and abroad in a most brazen fashion. The Soviet military typically behaves in this fashion. The statement of the Warsaw Pact Committee of Defense Ministers, which disclosed the strength of Warsaw Pact forces, made it clear that civilian employees were not counted because they do not undergo military training.<sup>101</sup> Civilian employees of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, when signing their contracts, are not told that they would have to take part in military training. Upon arrival in East Germany, however, they discover that, in their own words:

**We all have without exception, in addition to our full time jobs, to participate in military training—even women who are exempt from military service. We have to get up [at night] for combat alerts, we have to wear military uniforms, we have to take part in small arms, drills and other types of military training. [Emphasis added]**

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<sup>100</sup>Yevgeniya Al'bats, "Bol'shaya lozh'," *Moskovskie novosti*, October 15, 1989.

<sup>101</sup>"Zayavlenie Komiteta ministrov oborony..." *Pravda*, January 30, 1989.

When a group of such civilians, whose letter was published in the government daily *Izvestiya*, had tried to complain they had been told by a commanding officer that "perestroika has not reached here and never will."<sup>102</sup> This is a disturbing example of contempt among the Soviet military for legality, for international obligations of their government, and for today's attempted change in Soviet security policies. This lie is also useless, almost knee-jerk, because the civilians' military training contributes nothing to the overall Soviet defense capability in Germany. At the same time, there is an encouraging note: the letter was published in a Soviet newspaper, something unthinkable until very recently. The military censorship apparently failed to stop it.

Just recently the Soviet military has demonstrated a disturbing propensity to misinform its own government. Foreign Minister Shevardnadze has insisted that in the aftermath of the massacre of peaceful demonstrators in Tbilisi on April 9, 1989, high-ranking military officers consistently mislead him, a Politburo member, about the methods they used for crowd control, and especially about their employment of toxic substances.<sup>103</sup> Shevardnadze has also accused the military of misleading the political leadership about the fact that the Krasnoyarsk LPAR is indeed a violation of the ABM Treaty, an accusation ringing true in light of the military's continuing refusal to recognize that the location of the radar in contravention of the ABM Treaty's provision was a violation!<sup>104</sup>

Many in the Soviet Union do not trust information supplied by the military on the "real" Soviet defense budget, released in 1989. The Prime Minister Ryzhkov stated that overall defense spending was 77.3 bln rubles.<sup>105</sup> Since that time the defense budget

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<sup>102</sup>"Zhenshchiny na voennom platsu," *Izvestiya*, October 24, 1989.

<sup>103</sup>Leonid Pleshakov, "Ubezhdai pravdoy," *Ogonyok*, 1990, no. 11, reproduced in *USSR Today. Soviet Media News and Features Digest*, pp. 5-7.

<sup>104</sup>E. A. Shevardnadze, "Vneshnyaya politika i perestroyka," *Izvestiya*, October 24, 1989. For the Soviet military's attitude, see John W. R. Lepingwell, "Soviet Early Warning Radars, Debated," *Report on the USSR*, August 17, 1990, pp. 14, 15.

<sup>105</sup>N. I. Ryzhkov, "O programme predstoyashchey deyatel'nosti pravitel'stva SSSR," *Izvestiya*, June 8, 1989.



numbers have been questioned as too small by many in the Soviet public, including Academician V. Avduevskiy, a top space scientist;<sup>106</sup> Major V. Lopatin, a radical Deputy in the Supreme Soviet, who has quoted an unnamed Ministry of Defense official as saying that in reality the defense budget is 120 bln rubles;<sup>107</sup> and Captain 3rd Rank A. Antoshkin, a student at the Lenin Military-Political Academy, who has compared contradictory statements of Soviet military officials on the subject, and concluded that the announced defense budget numbers are meaningless.<sup>108</sup> It appears now that the doubters do have a point. It follows from a statement by the Department Head in the Directorate of Administrative Affairs of the USSR Council of Ministers S. Guchmazov, that **the announced defense budget did not include:**

**...all direct and indirect expenditures which a state makes in order to provide for a possibility of its stable functioning in emergency situations, including war.<sup>109</sup>**

Among such expenditures, Guchmazov lists pre-draft training, an ineffective but omnipresent activity, partially financed through involuntary membership dues; reserve officer training of students, which is carried out in the majority of the Soviet colleges, each having a military department staffed with officers up to general rank; and accumulation of state and mobilizational reserves!<sup>110</sup> Following this logic, one is justified in suspecting that such major items as construction, operation and maintenance of very extensive nuclear war command, control and survival

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<sup>106</sup>B. Konovalov, "Porazhenie militarizovannoy ekonomiki," *Izvestiya*, February 7, 1990.

<sup>107</sup>S. Aleksandrov, "Voennaya reforma," *Nedelya*, no. 22, 1990.

<sup>108</sup>A. Antoshkin, "Naemnaya armiya: dorozhe ili deshevle?" *Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil*, no. 9, 1990, p. 39.

<sup>109</sup>A. Lopukhin, "Dividendy mira i konversiya," *Pravda*, July 30, 1990.

<sup>110</sup>*Ibid.* For details on the Soviet system of reserve officer training, see Mikhail Tsyarkin, *Soviet Reserve Officer Training System: An Assessment* (Monterey, CA: Naval Postgraduate School, 1988), NPS-56-88-017, 73pp.



facilities for the Soviet leadership, as well as some of the Civil Defense facilities and activities, have not been included either!<sup>111</sup>

The U.S. should be aware of the Soviet military's propensity to stage *pokazukha*, or Potemkin villages (a historic Russian term!) as a knee-jerk response to anything smacking of an inspection. It has become a routine practice to prepare military bases for important visitors by painting grass (in lieu of real lawns), removing soldiers to different quarters (so that they do not soil the cleaned up barracks), and turning the messes into something akin to real restaurants.<sup>112</sup> This practice apparently took a quantum leap forward in response to military *glasnost* in 1988, when the Ministry of Defense began mass construction of "show military settlements" (*pokaznye voennye gorodki*) specially designed to impress visiting officials. Considerable effort and resources are devoted to building expensively furnished (for instance, with wood panelled walls) barracks, gyms, etc., while the real needs of the servicemen continue to be ignored.<sup>113</sup> Such tendencies are likely to complicate verification of compliance with arms control agreements and confidence building measures.

Not to be excessively pessimistic, we should note that most of examples of secrecy and deception, including those in the military area, that this analysis relies upon, have been drawn from the Soviet published sources! This is a hopeful sign, but it also reminds us that we can be assured of Soviet military intentions and capabilities only if the Soviet public is assured that it has an inalienable right to know about their nation's military affairs.

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<sup>111</sup>For the extent of Soviet gigantic effort to build and operate leadership survival facilities, see *Soviet Military Power: An Assessment of the Threat, 1988* (Washington, D.C.: US GPO, n.d.), pp. 59-62. The Soviets have never seriously refuted this information.

<sup>112</sup>Danuta Yunavichene, "Sovetskaya armiya--teatr absurda," *Kauno Aidas*, September 21, 1989.

<sup>113</sup>Letter from political officer G. Grozmani, in *Ogonyok*, 1989, no. 50.

### 3. 5. How Much Should the Soviet Public Know?

Defense Minister Yazov has recently proclaimed that transparency of military activities will become "nearly the guarantee" of international security, because it allows the "popular masses" interested in the preservation of peace, to participate actively in military affairs.<sup>114</sup> The experience shows that so far the Soviet military is very uneasy about giving its public the right to know.

Shocking as it may be for the Soviet military to see the U. S. Secretary of Defense in the cockpit of a Blackjack bomber, the most threatening (from the military's standpoint) aspect of *glasnost*' has been the furious domestic public debate about the condition of the Soviet Armed Forces. Many vocal members of the public have begun to question widely ranging military policies, from the poor condition of conscripts to the necessity for conscription itself, to the size of the military budget, to the structure of the armed forces. *Glasnost*' has opened up for discussion such topics as the military's responsibility for the massacre of peaceful demonstrators in Tbilisi, Georgia in April 1989, ethnic conflicts in the military, and military performance in Afghanistan.

This has caused the extreme concern of the high command as well as lower ranking officers. This concern has found a sympathetic ear in the Central Committee of the communist party. The latter body, highly conscious of the pivotal role the military plays in maintaining political stability inside the Soviet Union, issued an authoritative memorandum demanding that the mass media limit its negative coverage of the military, and that the major newspapers "borrow" from the Ministry of Defense its own journalists in officer uniforms to write on military matters. This position was reaffirmed in another Central Committee

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<sup>114</sup>Yazov, "Novaya model' bezopasnosti," p. 68.

memorandum in November of 1989.<sup>115</sup> An analysis of the Soviet press, however, does not show any visible impact of the memorandum, as criticism of the military continues.

The military has also been quite concerned about an intrusion of academics and other civilians into debates on Soviet military affairs. These academics have criticized practically all aspects of the Soviet force posture, beginning with "tankomania" and ending with blue water navy, and have clamored for release of classified information in order to facilitate their analyses and public discussion (predictably, in a critical spirit) of military policies. The military have responded by accusing academics and other civilian critics of "incompetence" and irresponsibility. Typically, the military argues that its "scientific" research proves that it is right, and its critics are wrong, but fails to disclose the nature of this research (presumably, because it is classified), and labels the debates conducted by non-military analysts as "harmful" for the "unprepared" public.<sup>116</sup> These counterattacks by the military, however, so far have done little to restrain their civilian critics.

There is an obvious relationship between the right of the Soviet public to know about military affairs and the West's confidence in Soviet compliance with arms control agreements and any other measures reducing the military threat. The Soviet military is fearful of public intrusion into its previously closed domain, and is psychologically unprepared for disclosing its policies to the public.

An attempt to build some degree of confidence between the military and the public has been undertaken when the Group of Public Observers (GON) was established in the spring of 1989. It is chaired by Dr. Andrei Kokoshin, Deputy Director of the USSR Academy Institute of USA and Canada and Deputy Chairman of the officially sponsored

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<sup>115</sup>"Ob osveshchenii v tsentral'noi pechati zhizni i deiatel'nosti Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil," *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 6, 1989; "O khode vypolneniya postanovleniya TsK KPSS ot 29 aprelya 1989 g. 'Ob osveshchenii v tsentral'noi pechati zhizni i deiatel'nosti Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh Sil,'" *Izvestiya TsK KPSS*, no. 1, 1990, pp. 14, 15.

<sup>116</sup>See, for instance, Alexei Arbatov, "How Much Defence Is Sufficient?" *International Affairs*, April 1989, pp. 31-44; Major General Yu. Lyubimov, "O dostatochnosti oborony i nedostatke kompetentnosti," *Kommunist Vooruzhennykh Sil* 1989, no. 16, pp. 21-26; and Lt. General Ye. Volkov, "Ne razyasnyaet, a zatumanivaet," *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 28, 1989. The quotes are taken from the last article.



Committee of Soviet Scientists to Defend Peace. In the recent years, Dr. Kokoshin emerged as one of the leading civilian analysts of military affairs and proponents of the defensive doctrine. In his criticism of the Soviet military establishment, Dr. Kokoshin is a moderate, compared to some of his more radical colleagues. The GON's goals are:

- To improve the relationship between the military and the public.
- To confirm that unilateral force reductions, which do not require verification, are actually carried out, and thus to reaffirm "the practical application of the defensive doctrine."
- To inform the public about the problems encountered by the servicemen discharged in the process of reductions, and help find solutions to their problems.
- To maintain contacts with public opinion makers abroad, and to invite, with permission of the General Staff obtained by May 1989, "foreign public figures and parliamentarians to take part in select observations of measures to reduce the USSR Armed Forces." (At the time of this writing, however, there have been no reports of GON joined by foreign observers in any of their activities.)

This is not a program of an adversarial public watchdog in the Ralph Nader style! Dr. Kokoshin recognized that in order to secure some cooperation of the military, GON must emphasize the priority of "helping" the military with their painful socio-economic problems.<sup>117</sup> If GON has to act as a military lobby on some issues in order to observe troop cuts, how likely is that group to have the clout and will to uncover and publicize violations of arms control treaties by the military? It is not even clear if GON is indeed a group, as follows from its name. So far the Soviet media have not identified its membership beyond Dr. Kokoshin and Dr. Sergei Rogov. There have been no reports of foreign participation.

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<sup>117</sup>Elena Agapova, "Nash chelovek v kongresse," *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 15, 1989; N. Sautin "Staryy marsh dlya podlodki," *Pravda*, October 31, 1989; S. Sidorov, "Pod nablyudeniem obshchestvennosti," *Krasnaya zvezda*, May 16, 1989. "V obstanovke glasnosti i otkrytosti," *Krasnaya zvezda*, May 14, 1989.



### ***3. 5. 1. Secrecy and the Supreme Soviet Committee on Defense and State Security.***

Hopes for a greater public participation in policy setting are primarily related to the emergence of a two-stage Soviet parliament, the Congress of People's Deputies which elects the Supreme Soviet to be in session for most of the year. The Supreme Soviet has established a Committee on Defense and State Security--the KOGB. How likely is the KOGB to rip the veil of secrecy and possibly expose deception in arms control?

The KOGB has 43 members. Of this number, twelve appear to be employed by the Soviet defense industry, including the leaders of the *Sukhoi* and *Ilyushin* aircraft design bureaus. Mikhail Simonov, the leader of the *Sukhoi* "firm," chairs the KOGB's subcommittee on defense industry. The membership includes six military officers, three of them high-ranking (former Chief of General Staff and now advisor to Gorbachev Marshal Sergei Akhromeev, Army General Vitaliy Shabanov, the Chief of Armaments of the Soviet Armed Forces, and Adm. Vitaliy Ivanov, Commander of the Baltic Fleet). One of the middle-ranking officers on the Committee, Lt. Colonel Viktor Podziruk, appears to be a maverick who defeated the commander of Soviet forces in Germany during the elections to the Congress of People's Deputies in 1989. Another junior officer, Nikolai Tutov, turned out to be a radical and joined the Interregional Group of Deputies, led by the late Dr. Andrei Sakharov, Boris Yeltsin, Gavriil Popov and other proponents of drastic democratic reforms. One member is an official of the DOSAAF--a "voluntary" society to assist the military. Three are high-ranking KGB officers. Eight are party and government officials, including two high-ranking party officials in charge of defense industry--Oleg Belyakov, the head of the Central Committee Department of Defense Industry, and Arkadiy Vol'skiy, until recently the head of the Central Committee Department of Machine Building Industry and also the Kremlin's ruler of the disputed Nagornyy Karabakh area of Azerbaijan. Two are scientists, physicists and Academy members Yevgeniy Velikhov and Andrei Gaponov-Grekhov, both

rumored to have a long-standing involvement with defense work. This accounts for 32 members of the KOGB.

The rest are educators, industry executives, and three reformist intellectuals: the Belorussian writer Vasil' Bykov (intensely disliked by the orthodox ideologists and the military since the 1960's for his realistic portrayal of World War II, of which he is a combat veteran), and two social scientists from Estonia and Lithuania, one of whom, Mechis Laurinkus, is a member of the Lithuanian mass movement for national revival, the Sajudis, which is viewed with open hostility by the military. (The third Baltic deputy in KOGB, Vello Vare, is a retired military officer now working in a historical research institute in Estonia).<sup>118</sup>

The personality of the man selected to be the first (until recently) KOGB Chairman, Professor Vladimir Lapygin, is also of interest. Now sixty five, a son of a peasant who apparently escaped into the city from the horrors of Stalin's collectivization, he has spent all his life working in the Soviet aerospace industry. He is a specialist in missile guidance, and has been the General Designer for the on-board control system of the Soviet space shuttle *Buran*, a controversial project criticized recently because of the bureaucratic selfishness and irrational management of the space program. Lapygin was elected not in Moscow, where he lives and works, but in the distant Siberian Tuva Autonomous Republic with which he has no obvious connection. That is a clear sign that he was designated by the communist party apparatus as a Deputy to the Congress of People's Deputies to be elected in a "safe" backwater district and eventually to the Supreme Soviet.

**The positions Lapygin staked out made him sound like a party loyalist:** he believes that the mission of KOGB is to provide for "combat readiness" of the

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<sup>118</sup>"Komitety Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR i postoyannye komissii Soveta Soyuzov i Soveta Natsionalnostey," *Izvestiya*, July 13, 1989; "Konversiya voennoy promyshlennosti v SSSR: kakoy put' predpochtitel'nee?" *Voenny Vestnik APN*, 1989, no. 21; Michael Dobbs, "Soviet army starts first labor union over strong objections," the Washington Post Service in *The Monterey Herald*, October 22, 1989; "Kommyunike zasedaniya Baltiyskogo Soveta," *Atmoda*, October 23, 1989; L. Sher, "Sil'na differentsiatsiya, slaba integratsiya," *Sovetskaya Estoniya*, June 7, 1989; A. Podvez'ko, "V sekretnom komitete," *Sovetskaya Estoniya*, January 28, 1990.

Soviet Armed Forces; he warns against "unilateral disarmament" and excessive zeal in conversion of defense industry for civilian needs; he views with suspicion the nationalists in the three Baltic republics, and he sees professional competence (in defense industry, military, or state security) of deputies in KOGB as essential for the Committee's work--the same emphasis on "competence" now used by the military trying to fend off their civilian critics. Introducing KOGB membership to the press, Lapygin completely ignored its "incompetent" members--a famous writer and two social scientists. Later he attacked one of them, Vasil' Bykov, for his alleged lack of interest in the Committee's work. This attack might have been in reality prompted by Bykov's negative views on the new armaments programs. (See Section 3. 4. 3.) Lapygin had initially spoken up strongly in favor of an all-volunteer military, a position opposite to that taken at the time by Defense Minister Yazov and other top ranking officers (with the partial exception of C-in-C of the Soviet Navy Admiral Chernavin). Later, however, **Lapygin moved closer to Yazov's position** by advocating volunteer forces only for nuclear submarines, the Strategic Rocket Forces, and strategic aviation.

As far as secrecy is concerned, **Lapygin has strongly defended a need for secrecy when it comes to new weapons and new technologies**, and has said that

The USA knows of course that we are working on systems capable in principle to countervail their SDI. But this does not mean that we must report in detail about our achievements in this or that direction of research...

At the same time he criticized abuses of secrecy prompted by "primitive spymania," such as making secret "the location of large defense enterprises and military bases known to the whole world," or even by the desire to hide various violations. Actually the KOGB has been meeting in secrecy, even without a classified stenographic record. An item which would be made public in the West, such as General Yazov's report to the KOGB on global military-political situation, was not disclosed. Only a meeting on defense industry



conversion (a topic with obvious propaganda appeal) was public. The KOGB's criticisms of the government's defense programs for FY '90 have been released through a newspaper in a most general form.<sup>119</sup>

Criticized for his cozy relationship with the military and for his attention to his overwhelming professional activities at the expense of the KOGB work, Lapygin has recently resigned from his post to be replaced by another trusted insider, Leonid Sharin, a communist party official.<sup>120</sup>

At this point one does not expect that the KOGB will be inclined to rip the veils of secrecy over Soviet military deployments and operations. It remains to be seen whether it would protest as a whole, or whether its individual members would protest if they uncover that the Soviet Armed Forces are cheating in arms control agreements. The pro-military bias of the KOGB has been noted by Academician and People's Deputy Georgiy Arbatov, who criticized it as "having a strange membership and working in a strange fashion," and doing nothing to reduce military secrecy.<sup>121</sup> One of the few radical members of the KOGB has revealed that the majority of the Committee's members believe that "the West still is threatening us, that our country may become a victim of aggression at any time." According to the same source, a minority is struggling against this view, but without visible success.<sup>122</sup>

It is not yet clear whether the military would inform KOGB about any violations or potential violations of arms control agreements, or whether the members of KOGB would be able to discover violations independently. So far, the Ministry of Defense has tried to

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<sup>119</sup>"Komitety Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR;" V. Kosarev, "S pozitivnykh myshleniy," *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 22, 1989; S. Taranov, "Glasnost' i gosudarstvennaya bezopasnost'," *Izvestiya*, June 26, 1989; Mikhail Tsyarkin, "Turmoil in Soviet Science," *Report on the USSR*, July 21, 1989, p. 19; I. Khristoforov, "Ukrepyat' trudnee chem sokrashchat'," *Sovetskiy voyn*, October 1989, no. 19, p. 3; Vladimir Lapygin, "Rassmatrivaetsya oboronnyy byudzhel," *Krasnaya zvezda*, October 5, 1989; V. Kosarev, "Poiski optimal'nogo resheniya," *Krasnaya zvezda*, October 13, 1989.

<sup>120</sup>See, for instance, V. Lapshin, "Kto pravil bal v kosmose?" *Argumenty i Fakty*, 1990, no. 28, reproduced in *USSR Today. Soviet Media News and Features Digest*, August 1, 1990, and Vladimir Lopatin, "Armiya i politika," *Znaniya*, July 1990, p. 157; *Radio Liberty Daily Report*, June 21, 1990.

<sup>121</sup>"Vtoroy s'ezd narodnykh deputatov SSSR. Stenograficheskiy otchet." *Izvestiya*, December 19, 1989.

<sup>122</sup>Podvez'ko, "V sekretnom komitete."



keep the Supreme Soviet deputies in charge of military affairs in the dark on crucial matters. For example, according to the KOGB member Nikolai Tutov, the defense budget has been disclosed to the KOGB members in the same generalized form as to the public (operation and maintenance, weapons acquisition, research and development, construction, pensions, and miscellaneous), while any details concerning concrete programs have been withheld. To counteract the Ministry's of Defense stonewalling, the more radical KOGB members are coming to rely on individuals they euphemistically refer to as "consultants;" who in reality are whistleblowers--disgruntled defense industry specialists, military and KGB officers who provide, despite threats of retribution, several KOGB members with information that their agencies are trying to conceal.<sup>123</sup>

#### **4. 0. MILITARY *GLASNOST'*: FUTURE SCENARIOS.**

The future balance between *glasnost'* and secrecy in the military will be affected by such factors as the general political situation in the Soviet Union, the dominant ideology, the role of military in politics and the Soviet view of the outside world. Today's extremely volatile political situation in the Soviet Union can confront us with a variety of scenarios determined by these factors.

##### **4. 1. The Uncertain Soviet Future.**

Gorbachev is a brilliant tactician capable of defending his power and pulling rabbits of reformist political miracles out of his communist party hat against all odds, but he is

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<sup>123</sup>*Ibid.*

hardly a far-sighted strategist of reform, as he is generally perceived in the West. A conservative critic compared Gorbachev to a pilot of an aircraft who has taken off without any idea of where he is going to land. Though unkind, this comparison has a point: Gorbachev has not been prepared for the enormous complexity of the task of reforming the Soviet empire. He has already been through two radically different economic programs, neither of which worked. The nationalist explosions in the Soviet Union have obviously caught Gorbachev by surprise.

Perhaps it is not humanly possible to be prepared for the tasks that Gorbachev is facing: the problems are too numerous and diverse, they have festered for decades, and there is little in Gorbachev's and his allies' communist intellectual baggage preparing them for truly new approaches to these problems. However commendable are Gorbachev's efforts to give his country a real legislature, the result is an emerging conflict between the communist party and the Supreme Soviet, a duality of power deemed dangerous even by pro-reform Soviet experts on internal security.<sup>124</sup>

While the traditional sources of authority are crumbling, and the new ones are not really established, Soviet society has become a seething ocean of volatile relatively unstructured political and ethnic popular movements, clashing with each other and the government. Some of these conflicts have already brought substantial casualties. In the language of political science, this is a classical situation of high social mobilization with low political institutionalization, a recipe for instability and possibly violence.<sup>125</sup> Indeed, one of the 1989's bestsellers in Moscow was an anti-utopia portraying the Soviet Union in 1992 as plagued by violence of all against all in an empire which has collapsed when Gorbachev's failing reforms were interrupted by a military coup.<sup>126</sup> In September 1989,

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<sup>124</sup>See, for instance, Rubanov, "Demokratiya i bezopasnost' strany," p. 49.

<sup>125</sup>See Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), pp. 8-47.

<sup>126</sup>Aleksandr Kabakov, "Nevozvrashchenets," *Iskusstvo kino*, June 1989, reprinted in *Novoe russkoe slovo*, September 22-26, 1989.

Gorbachev felt it necessary to deny that the country was sliding into chaos and civil war.<sup>127</sup> But such possibilities are now discussed openly and seriously in mass media.<sup>128</sup>

This is not to say that Gorbachev and the policies currently associated with him are doomed. The fact that he has survived thus far is an indication by itself that there exist some socio-political structures supporting his policies. But had Gorbachev been so confident in the strength of these structures, he would not have tried to amass potentially dictatorial powers in his hands first as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, and then, when this post turned out not be strong enough, as President of the USSR. It is only logical to recognize that if the emergence of Gorbachev with his *perestroika* and *glasnost'* on the Soviet political scene was unpredictable, then we have to consider seriously political scenarios which even today seem shocking.

#### 4. 2. Scenario One: Modernization Muddles Through.

Let us assume that Gorbachev survives in power with at least some of his current political program intact. This means continuing efforts to integrate the Soviet Union into the world community and modernize it internally. This scenario is favorable for preserving and broadening military *glasnost'*, but at a closer look we will discover some problems. Continuation of Gorbachev's policies will most likely mean years of political instability. While Gorbachev's current policies of democratization are pointing towards some "demilitarization" of Soviet state and society, "the future development of these processes,"

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<sup>127</sup>"Vystuplenie General'nogo sekretarya TsK KPSS, Predsedatelya Verkhovnogo Soveta SSSR M. S. Gorbacheva po Tsentral'nomu te'zisu," *Pravda*, September 10, 1989.

<sup>128</sup>See, for instance, Kseniya Malo, "Vremya razbrasyvat' kamni?" *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, November 24, 1989.



as David Holloway has observed, "remains uncertain, and the danger exists that the military might be a willing instrument in bringing them to an end."<sup>129</sup>

Such an "end" could easily come if (some might say, when) Gorbachev has to use the military to impose martial law in vast areas of the Soviet Union to suppress nationalist movements or/and workers' strikes. Actually, the military (usually the paratroopers) have already supplemented the internal security troops' "law and order" operations in Transcaucasia, Central Asia and Moldavia.<sup>130</sup> The military is beginning to recognize openly its role as the ultimate guarantors of stability of the Soviet empire. A staff writer for the Ministry of Defense daily newspaper described the military as "a powerful counterbalance to those" who are using *perestroika* to oppose the fundamentals of the Soviet system. Lt. General O. Zinchenko, Commander of the Political Directorate of the Baltic Military district, described the Soviet military as "the main obstacle to a restoration of bourgeois [political] structures..."<sup>131</sup> Minister of Defense General Dmitriy Yazov, speaking at a Plenary meeting of the Central Committee in September 1989, bluntly demanded that the party leadership put an end to manifestations of nationalism in the Union Republics and warned: "we have no right to underestimate the concerns (*obespokoennost'*) of those who bear arms."<sup>132</sup>

The first full-scale use of force for maintaining regime stability occurred in Azerbaijan in January 1990. In that case, Gorbachev was criticized for not using the troops during anti-Armenian violence there, and giving the military their marching orders only when the communist party control was gravely threatened. Accusations of preoccupation with communist party power over the issue of saving lives might very well be true; but it is also possible that Gorbachev hesitated to use the armed forces in the Azerbaijani-Armenian

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<sup>129</sup>David Holloway, "State, Society, and the Military under Gorbachev," *International Security*, Winter 1989-90, vol. 14, no. 3, p.24.

<sup>130</sup>See V. Zyubin, "O demokratii i poryadke," *Krasnaya zvezda*, August 8, 1990.

<sup>131</sup>S. Ishchenko, "Armiya zashchishchaet nas, a kto zashchitit armiyu?" *Molodaya gvardiya*, November 1989, p. 222; Lt. Gen. O. Zinchenko, "Sluzhim v Pribaltike," *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 20, 1989.

<sup>132</sup>D. Yazov, "Armiya druzhby i bratstva narodov."



conflict until too late because, among other things, he was reluctant to give the military a greater political role.

Greater reliance on the military for maintaining regime stability will have a negative impact on military *glasnost*'. First, the more of the Soviet territory is under martial law (or its equivalent), the more reluctant will be not only the military but also the politicians to lift the veil of secrecy from military operations out of fear of embarrassment or out of concern for operations security. The initial reaction of the Kremlin to the proclamation of Lithuanian independence was very much along these lines: the use of the military to intimidate the nationalists and the closure of the Lithuanian territory to foreigners.

Second, the military (or, at least, the senior officers) see *glasnost*' as something imposed upon them, associated with the loss of war in Afghanistan, decline in the military's prestige and budget, unceremonious discharge of tens of thousands of officers into an uncertain future, vigorous public criticism of the military, doubts about the need for military force in a new international environment, etc. Although quite a few junior officers have become politically radicalized and do not share anti-*glasnost*' sentiments, it is clear that the senior officer corps would use the first opportunity, presented by an improvement of the military's political fortunes in the course of a military crackdown, to curtail *glasnost*'.

The greater the military's political clout, the less responsive it might become to the needs of politicians to impress the West with military *glasnost*'. There have been some signs of the military's increased assertiveness in this area. A day before Gorbachev-Bush summit in Malta the Soviet military detained a group of U. S. servicemen assigned to the American military mission in Potsdam apparently while they were observing Soviet military activities. Given the political sensitivity of such an act, and given that the Soviets had been trying hard to come to the summit without a baggage of aggravation, we might assume that the Soviet military acted with more than usual political boldness and independence!

In another example, only days before Foreign Minister Shevardnadze acknowledged that the large phased array radar near Krasnoyarsk was a violation of the Treaty, the Ministry of Defense daily had printed an article signed by a First Deputy Chief of the General Staff flatly denying this.<sup>133</sup> This was quite a confrontational gesture, given that the political leadership had already implicitly recognized the violation (when Shevardnadze had pledged to Secretary of State James Baker that the radar would be destroyed), and that the military command must have known or at least anticipated that a public confession of a violation might follow.

#### 4. 3. Scenario Two: A Conservative Take-Over.

This scenario does not involve a return to power in the Kremlin of orthodox "fire-and-brimstone" Marxist-Leninists who would restore Stalinist purity to the Soviet Union. The longer *glasnost'* continues with its revelations about past abuses and failures, the more do both the Soviet elite and people see other communist regimes (especially the ultra-orthodox ones, like in Rumania, GDR or Czechoslovakia) being blown away by popular discontent, the more isolated are the regimes where communist parties still have the monopoly on power, the more elections do communist officials lose in the Soviet Union, the less likely will be an attempt to restore Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy there, because it is too discredited to provide a basis for regime legitimacy.

What will be the new ideological foundation for legitimacy of a government ruling what today constitutes the Soviet Union? It might be that the idea of democracy by itself will gradually become such a foundation, and then a scenario described in the Section 4. 1. will evolve towards a stable constitutional democracy over years, if not decades, of

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<sup>133</sup>Col. General B. Omelichev, "Snyat' ozabochnost," *Krasnaya zvezda*, October 5, 1989.

instability, martial law interspersed by thaws, etc. The gravest threats to such a course of political development are presented by the multi-ethnic imperial character of the Soviet state, the dismal economic situation, and the lack of a democratic tradition. These three factors can conspire to create a new conservative ideology out of the remnants of Soviet communism and elements of Great Russian nationalism.

The Soviet regime has tried, since the days of Stalin, to strengthen its legitimacy by appealing to Great Russian nationalism, and has done so with some success. Despite the fact that for the most part Russian nationalists have no sympathy for Marxist-Leninist ideas, they still identify themselves with the empire built by the followers of that ideology. As a result, the weakening of the Kremlin's grip over the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe and along the ethnic periphery of the USSR itself, is often perceived by Great Russians as an affront to their national pride or even as a threat to their national existence.

The formation of such an ideology is already taking place, and the Soviet military is taking an active part in this process. This ideology is broadly characterized by acute concern over the fate of the Russian nation within the Soviet Union, hostility towards the nationalist movements in Union Republics, an extreme anxiety about the stability of the Soviet state, an emphasis on Russia's unique place among nations, on its glorious past and national pride, strong feelings against Western influences and perceived victimization of Russia by the West, and, last but not least, strong support for the military as a major ingredient of Russian patriotism.

Among the major groups and social elements subscribing to and developing this type of ideology, are: anti-reformist communist party members, both professional party functionaries and industrial executives, etc., who have attracted some industrial workers into so-called Workers' Fronts; members of Russia's creative intelligentsia; and military officers. The military have opened the pages of their press to some of the more notable figures in this ideological movement, from Nina Andreeva (whose "letter", promoted by anti-Gorbachev elements in the communist party in 1988, was promptly reprinted by



newspapers of military districts), to Aleksandr Prokhanov, a pro-military author and now one of the leaders of a Russian nationalist organization the United Council of Russia (*Ob'edinennyy sovet Rossii*), to Karem Rash, a previously unknown school teacher who glorifies the past, present and future of the Soviet Armed Forces.<sup>134</sup>

Some military officers and veterans have been making public statements along the lines of this nascent ideology, most notably Col. General Boris Gromov, the last commandeer of the Soviet Forces in Afghanistan and now commander of the crucially important Kiev Military District.<sup>135</sup> An unprecedentedly vicious attack on perestroika and "new thinking" in foreign policy was delivered by Gen. Al'bert Makashov, the commander of the Volga-Urals Military District, at the First Congress of the Russian Communist Party in June of 1990. To the applause of this predominantly conservative gathering, Makashov described as "learned turkeys" the "new thinkers" who deny existence of an immediate threat of attack on the Soviet Union, and made thinly veiled threats of a military coup.<sup>136</sup> According to the former KGB Major General Oleg Kalugin, who has joined the democratic opposition, Makashov "gave away the position of many high-ranking military and KGB officers."<sup>137</sup>

It is difficult to assess the popularity of such views among the officer corps. An analysis of the voting patterns of military officer-members of the Russian Federation Congress of People's Deputies shows that only 16 percent of the votes of top military officers were cast for proposals sponsored by the democratic bloc, "compared with 82 percent against, whereas among the middle-level army officers the figure was 63 percent

<sup>134</sup>Karem Rash, "Armiya i kul'tura," *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal*, no. 2, 1989, pp. 3-15; no. 3, 1989, pp. 3-10; no. 4, 1989, pp. 3-13; no. 5, 1989, pp. 3-11; no. 7, 1989, pp. 3-13; no. 8, 1989, pp. 3-13; no. 9, 1989, pp. 3-14; S. Pashaev, "Aleksandr Prokhanov: 'Nasha assotsiatsiya prizyvaet k soglasiyu'," *Krasnaya zvezda*, October 24, 1989; Col. Yu. Vashkevich, "Chest'," *Krasnaya zvezda*, November 10, 1989. On Karem Rash, also see Holloway, "State, Society, and the Military under Gorbachev," pp. 22, 23, and Mikhail Tsypkin, "Karem Rash: An Ideologue of Military Power," *Report on the USSR*, vol. 2, no. 31, pp. 8-11.

<sup>135</sup>Nikolai Bulavintsev, "Pravda vyshe sensatsii," *Sovetskaiya Rossiya*, November 15, 1989.

<sup>136</sup>Col. Gen. A. Makashov, "My ne sobirayemsiya sdavat'sya," *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 21, 1990.

<sup>137</sup>L. Zagal'skii, O. Moroz, "Tsenoy general'skikh lampasov," *Molodezh' Gruzii*, July, 27, 1990.



(37 percent against), and among junior officers--73 percent (22 percent against).<sup>138</sup> At the same time, according to People's Deputy Major V. Lopatin, the failure of new representative bodies to take care of the rapidly deteriorating social conditions of the officer corps is making junior officers increasingly subject to manipulation by their conservative superiors.<sup>139</sup>

The RSFSR 1990 elections platform of "the Block of Social-Patriotic Movements of Russia" (which includes a group of USSR People's Deputies-members of the deputies "club" "Russia", as well as a number of new cultural and political organizations) describes "reasonable defensive sufficiency" as "naive." A group of nationalistically minded People's Deputies from the Russian Federation criticized during its "working meeting" in December 1989 the alleged "euphoria" from "growing foreign policy contacts" which should not "conceal the obvious fact that the ring of American bases around our country has not been weakened, that disarmament is so far conducted unilaterally [by the USSR], that the COCOM technological blockade of the Soviet Union has been joined by South Korea."<sup>140</sup>

Russian nationalists have expressed concern that *glasnost'* would allow foreigners unimpeded access to something that can only be described as Russia's non-military non-secrets. They have recently targeted their attacks on article 37 in the draft law on state archives, permitting foreigners to make copies of Soviet archival documents and take them out of the USSR.<sup>141</sup> The fear of free market methods is combined with general anger against foreigners, who enjoy, from the point of view of an average Russian, a lifestyle in the Soviet Union beyond the wildest dreams of a Soviet citizen. As the economy deteriorates, as the ruble increasingly loses any buying power, and as hard currency

<sup>138</sup>Julia Wishnevsky, "The Two Sides of the Barricades in Russian Politics Today," *Report on the USSR*, August 24, 1990, p. 17.

<sup>139</sup>Sergei Leskov, "Krasnaya armiya vsekh sil'ney," *Nachalo*, July '90, no. 3.

<sup>140</sup>"Za politiku narodnogo soglasiya i rossiyskogo vrozozhdeniya," *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, December 29, 1989; "Eto vystradano samoy zhizniyu," *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, December 14, 1989.

<sup>141</sup>B. Pirogovskiy, "Otechestvennye arkhivy: natsional'noe dostovanie ili boykaya rasprodazha?" *Literaturnaya Rossiya*, December 22, 1989.

becomes the symbol of prosperity in these trying times, anti-foreign sentiment may become a serious political factor exploited by a Russian nationalist conservative political force. This would create frictions and difficulties in verification of earlier concluded arms control agreements, as Americans, steeped in their highly legalistic political culture, insist on strict verification and compliance, and as the Soviets, increasingly secretive and non-legalistic, react with irritation and evasion.

The emergence of a political leadership inspired by an ideology of the sort described above would have a dampening impact on military *glasnost'*. One element in such a leadership, which would represent a coalition of various groups, the communist conservatives, has already spoken up against military *glasnost'*. At the April 1989 Plenum of the Central Committee, when many of Gorbachev's reformist policies came under sharp criticism of party functionaries, the proposed relaxation of the system of state secrets came under fire from R. S. Bobovikov, candidate member of the Central Committee and party leader of the Vladimir *oblast'*:

One cannot agree with those who propose to open wide all state borders, to declassify all military secrets. Even in the era of *glasnost'* there must be and there will be industrial enterprises and design bureaus closed from excessively curious eyes.<sup>142</sup>

Similar views have been expressed by the Nina Andreeva, whose earlier mentioned letter made her a symbol of traditionalist resistance to reforms:

...*glasnost'* is not an end in itself...That is why its limits are historically movable and flexible. It is known that *glasnost'* has been limited everywhere in times of military conflicts and crises. It does not involve military and state secrets, scientific and technological secrets.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>142</sup>Materialy plenuma Tsentral'nogo Komiteta KPSS. 25 aprelya 1989 goda (Moscow: Politizdat, 1989), pp. 24, 25.

<sup>143</sup>Nina Andreeva "Glasnost' o yazyvaet," *Molodaya Gvardiya*, no. 7, 1989, p. 274.

This position would exclude a relaxation of secrecy now (because the USSR is clearly in crisis) and in general, because if military, state and scientific and technological secrets are not subject to *glasnost*, what is? Hostility against Western access to Soviet military "secrets" has been voiced recently by a very vocal member of the Congress of People's Deputies from Estonia E. Kogan. (He operates within the loose alliance of party conservatives, Russian nationalists and workers' fronts). He accused an unnamed People's Deputy of participating in overflights of "foreign agents" over Soviet "military facilities" (obviously a reference to one of the recent gestures of military *glasnost*).<sup>144</sup>

Conservative Russian nationalism puts emphasis on Russian "uniqueness," which in effect contradicts the current trend (however inconsistent) to integrate the Soviet Union with the rest of the world.<sup>145</sup> The less the Soviet Union is integrated into the world community, the more reasons for political tensions in the future, and consequently the more reasons for military secrecy.

Another ever-present strand of Russian nationalism is a fervent belief that Russia and the Russians have traditionally been victimized by foreigners, have been too accommodating to foreigners for Russia's good, that Russia has been destroyed by Marxism imported from the West, and is being destroyed now by mindless importation of Western ideas and culture. For example, many prominent Russian nationalists have protested sales of raw materials to the West as an act of devastation of Russia's natural riches as a result of a plot between cynical Western capitalists and Soviet cosmopolitan bureaucrats. The above-mentioned election program of the Russian nationalist group

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<sup>144</sup>Statement by People's Deputy E. Kogan in "Vtoroy s'ezd narodnykh deputatov SSSR. Stenograficheskiy otchet," *Izvestiya*, December 24, 1989.

<sup>145</sup>This view spreads from the extremists of the *Pamyat'* xenophobic organization to the enlightened Russian nationalists like Dr. Igor' Shafarevich. See, for instance, I. Shafarevich, "Dve dorogi - k odnomu obryvu," *Novyy Mir*, July 1989



describes Western investors as "economic occupants," and pledges to annul "anti-people" business deals "without any compensation" to foreign businesses.<sup>146</sup>

Similar concerns are apparently present among the military. Defense Minister Yazov expressed irritation about "kowtowing" to foreigners because of *glasnost'*. When asked about foreign access to the formerly closed city of Vladivostok, Yazov was reported to have said: "None of them [foreign delegations] will break their backs by making a call and notifying in advance that they wish to pay a visit."<sup>147</sup> A colonel teaching at the Frunze Military Academy recently said that enemies of the Russian people are exaggerating the potential economic benefits of defense cuts, because the real sources of economic problems are international agreements (the context suggests that he had trade agreements in mind, but one cannot exclude that he also implied arms control agreements) which frequently have the effect of enslaving Russia to foreigners. In the same breath the colonel expressed considerable irritation about the calls for further military *glasnost'*.<sup>148</sup>

The emphasis on the state as the guarantor of stability and distrust of society, implicit in the conservative ideology, as well as the special role this ideology grants to the military as an institution of nearly mystical importance for the development of the national character, are not conducive to military *glasnost'*. A regime guided by this ideology will also be more likely to use force to quell ethnic and labor unrest than a modernizing regime such as described in Scenario One. Such a regime would react negatively to military *glasnost'*. (See Section 4.2)

It is clear from the above that a change to a conservative Russian nationalist regime will reverse military *glasnost'* and make the USSR or its successor regime/s a difficult arms control partner for the U.S. and NATO.

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<sup>146</sup>"Za politiku narodnogo soglasiya i rossiyskogo vrozozhdeniya."

<sup>147</sup>Moscow Radio Domestic Service in Russian, 0900 GMT, July 3, 1989, in FBIS-SOV, July 3, 1989.

<sup>148</sup>Col. A. Yefimov, "Zachem imi eto nado," *Nash sovremennik*, November 1989.



So far the conservative Russian nationalists have attracted relatively little overall popularity. They did very poorly in the 1990 elections to the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies, and lost in their common effort with anti-reform communists to prevent Boris Yeltsin's election as the Chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. Their main liability in the eyes of the public has been their support for the most conservative elements in the communist party and their *de facto* alliance with the highly unpopular party apparatus.<sup>149</sup> The same goes for the military high command, who seem to find it incomprehensible that in today's political climate their insistence on loyalty to the communist party only discredits them. But the pace of change in the Soviet Union is so rapid, that we cannot preclude a situation when the conservative alliance would no longer be hampered by the association with the old regime. The democratic mayor of Moscow, Gavriil Popov, has warned the enormous economic problems are already giving the communists voted out of power a second chance, as they begin to use their new power of opposition, now no longer blamed for all the social ills, to mobilize the population.<sup>150</sup>

#### 4. 4. Scenario Three: Democratic Reform.

What if radical and rapid democratic reform is pursued in the Soviet Union? So far, the supporters of democratic change seem to be on the ascendance in most of the union republics. In Russia, they have also made an important political move of identifying themselves with the Russian national interests when Boris Yeltsin proclaimed the sovereignty of the Russian Federation.

The representatives of the democratic ideological strand in the Soviet political spectrum are clearly in favor of continuing integration of the Soviet Union into the world

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<sup>149</sup>See Lyudmila Saraskina, "Primirenie na lobnom meste," *Znamya*, no. 7, 1990, p. 195.

<sup>150</sup>Gavriil Popov, "Dangers of Democracy," *The New York Review of Books*, August 16, 1990.

community, committed to openness in government, and regard the Soviet military as a burden on the nation's economy and political structure rather than a pillar of the state. Lately the democratic reformers have clashed repeatedly and heatedly with the military over budget, secrecy, conscription, etc. If in power, they will be inclined to move the borders of military *glasnost*' far enough to reassure the West against Soviet deception.

There are two major questions concerning this scenario. The first one is: will democratic reformers be able to enforce their military policies? Given the absence of a democratic political tradition and the precarious economic conditions in the Soviet Union, a government of democratic reformers, if it wants to survive, could afford to antagonize the military only so far. In this difficult and hazardous transition, micromanaging military *glasnost*' (which is necessary given the military's lukewarm feelings about it) might be impossible. If the military are already challenging the civilian authority of Gorbachev, their resistance to an intrusion by a government of liberal democrats unsure of its own power (and loathed by top Soviet military officers), is likely to be much stronger. And no change in the system of government will cancel the negative characteristics of the Soviet/Russian bureaucratic political culture, at least in the short term.

The second question is: how relevant will be arms control agreements and the military *glasnost*' policies pursued by a democratic government in Moscow? Whatever else, such a government is likely to preside over the dissolution of the Soviet Union as a national security entity. Much of the arms control baggage from today and immediate future will simply be of no importance if the Soviet Union is replaced by several successor states. This is especially true of any agreements reducing conventional forces and their activities. Many of the union republics are already demanding military formations of their own. If they become completely independent or independent within a loose federation, they are likely to acquire their own conventional forces, and not be bound by agreements concluded previously by the all-Union government in the Kremlin.

While even the liberal democrats in Moscow, who advocate the right of independence for the union republics, agree that the best way for handling the Soviet arsenal of nuclear weapons will be to leave them under the control of some type of a federal military command in Moscow<sup>151</sup> (some union republics, like the Ukraine, have already declared their intention to stay non-nuclear), the reality might turn out to be different. If the Soviet strategic arsenal ends up split between several successor states, they might very well refuse to carry out all or some of the provisions of arms control agreements signed earlier by Moscow without their consent. Such agreements and their verification provisions might have to be renegotiated with the Soviet successor states. Political stability in the region now constituting the Soviet Union is of paramount importance here: the more hostile the relations between successor states, the lower the likelihood of their observing and successfully renegotiating the existing arms control and confidence building agreements.

Still, the fact that a government of radical reformers would be seeking a long-term accommodation with the West on the basis of common political values would by itself reduce the justification for military secrecy. A government of this type in Moscow will also be more likely to manage a reasonably amicable dissolution of the Soviet monolith than either the muddling-through Gorbachevian modernizers or the outright conservatives.

#### **4. 5. Scenario Four: Disintegration of the Soviet Union.**

Disintegration of the Soviet Union is a plausible scenario today when the unthinkable is becoming a reality throughout the communist world. It can result from any of the three scenarios described above. The muddling modernization (Scenario One) may fail and end immediately in an explosion of chaos. The Gorbachevian muddling

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<sup>151</sup>Viktor Altaev, "Vooruzheniye Sily SSSR: v kontse puti," *Vek XX i mir*, no. 6, 1990, p. 30.



modernizers might be replaced by the Russian nationalist conservatives (Scenario Two). These are likely to cause increasing hostility in the Union Republics because they lack the ability or the desire to understand the problems of national minorities in the Soviet Union, or are outright hostile to them and ready to use force to save the Soviet/Russian empire. This might lead to an outbreak of anti-Russian resistance in the Union Republics, growing into a civil war. The liberal democrats (Scenario Three) might be unable to thwart a coup by the conservatives in alliance with the military and the KGB, resulting again in a possibility of the chaos and devastation of Scenario Four.

Under Scenario Four, the military will be involved for a length of time in internal operations, which is not conducive to *glasnost*'. This would be particularly true of conventional forces, which would be directly involved in attempts to restore order, fight secessionist movements, etc. If by that time, however, the Soviet conventional forces leave Eastern and Central Europe and there is no political base for their reintroduction, the degree of secrecy or *glasnost*' around Soviet conventional forces would be less of an immediate concern to NATO and the U.S. Of immense concern during such a time would be *glasnost*' about the Soviet strategic forces. **We can only hope that even under conditions of disintegration of the central authority the Soviet military would manage to comply with at least the most important provisions of nuclear arms control agreements and maintain a degree of openness about their nuclear forces and operations necessary for reassuring the United States about the Soviet compliance, capabilities and intentions in the realm of strategic weapons.**

## 5. 0. CONCLUSIONS.

The Soviets have made some substantive and symbolic steps to military *glasnost*' real, which are beneficial to Western security interests. Unfortunately, such benefits are so



far limited, and might remain so in the future. These limitations stem from the transitional character of military *glasnost*: born, together with other Gorbachev's innovations out of a profound crisis of the Soviet politico-economic system, it leads an uneasy existence assailed by the Russian/Soviet tradition of secrecy, bureaucratic self-interests of the military, and increasing uncertainty of the future of reforms. The policy of military *glasnost* does serve the Soviet political and economic needs of today because it helps reduce East-West tensions, makes public criticism of the many shortcomings of the military establishment possible, and, being a part of the general overhaul of the system of state secrets, should contribute to development of a modern society in the USSR. It has by no means become entrenched in the Soviet political and military institutions and traditions, and can be reduced or overturned by a changing course of political events, just as it was born out of such a change. Moreover, the established tendency to give exclusive control over designating secrets and declassifying information to the bureaucratic agency which "owns" a given type of secrets (in our case, it is the Ministry of Defense and various defense industrial ministries) is likely to slow military *glasnost* down.

One finds the abundance of contradictions to be the most salient feature of military *glasnost* and associated policies. Military *glasnost* is apparently not a part of strategic deception campaign to lull the West into a false sense of security. At the same time, military *glasnost* is obviously catering to Western public opinion. Military *glasnost* has resulted in declassification of some genuinely secret information, but it has not abolished military secrecy: instead, it is supposed to make the Soviet system of military secrets more modern. Military *glasnost* is intended to reveal information that the West is likely to obtain through satellite and other technical intelligence means, while retaining secrecy around military and militarily significant research and development.

Military *glasnost* is organically linked with the new "defensive military doctrine," but those in charge of implementing the new doctrine and *glasnost*--the Soviet military--are themselves all too frequently either confused or negative about Gorbachev's military

doctrine. It is possible that in the future Western expectations of defense-oriented change in Soviet military posture, based on today's promises, would collide with sabotage and/or inertia of the Soviet military establishment in executing these changes.

It is even more important that the political context of military *glasnost'* is extremely volatile. *Glasnost'* in general and military *glasnost'* in particular run counter to the deeply embedded traits in the Soviet/Russian political culture, and are encountering resistance from an alliance of communist party traditionalists and conservative Russian nationalists. Military *glasnost'* is part of a campaign to narrow the gap dividing the Soviet Union from Western democracies, a goal which is increasingly attracting the ire of this alliance.

Moreover, the growing instability of the Soviet empire is likely to create conditions unfavorable to military *glasnost'*. If Gorbachev's reformism continues to muddle through, the regime might rely increasingly on the military to maintain stability throughout the empire, which would give the military additional political clout and increase the need for operations security--both factors unfavorable to military *glasnost'*. If conservative forces come to power, their hostility to the West and to *glasnost'*, and their close relationship with many high-ranking military officers, as well as greater reliance on the military for maintaining stability, will have a strongly negative impact on military *glasnost'*. Radical reformers, if they come to power, will be sympathetic to military *glasnost'*, but might lack the clout to enforce openness in the military establishment. Moreover, the weakness of the Soviet regime or its successors and of their military establishment might prompt them to become more secretive in order to avoid exposing that weakness.

Each of these three scenarios may lead to disintegration of the Soviet empire and/or temporary collapse of central authority. This would mean massive involvement of the military in politics and security operations, neither condition conducive to military *glasnost'*. Under this scenario, military *glasnost'* itself would lose some of its relevance because the meaning of at least some arms control agreements concluded now or in the near future would be lost in a changed world. At the same time, the West will have a

tremendous stake in assuring the security and stability of Soviet command and control of nuclear weapons, and we may only hope that a measure of military *glasnost'* sufficient for this purpose will be preserved even under extreme circumstances.





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